

A STUDY OF THE SONATA FOR PIANOFORTE AND
VIOLIN IN D MINOR, OPUS 108 BY JOHANNES BRAHMS

by

DAVID E. ZWEIFEL

AN ESSAY

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THE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC
of
THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

presents

DAVID ZWEIFEL

VIOLINIST

with

JANET SCOTT, pianist

Friday, January 23, 1976 at 8:00 p.m.
Convocation Hall, Arts Building

SONATA IN D MAJOR, OP. 1,
NO. 13 (c.1722) Georg Friedrich Handel
(1685-1759)

Affettuoso
Allegro
Larghetto
Allegro

SONATA IN D MINOR, OP. 108 (1886-1888) Johannes Brahms
(dedicated to Hans von Bülow) (1833-1897)

Allegro
Adagio
Un poco presto e con sentimento
Presto agitato

INTERMISSION

TZIGANE (1924) Maurice Ravel
(dedicated to Jelly D'Aranyi) (1875-1937)

INTRODUCTION AND RONDO CAPRICCIOSO,
OP. 28 (1870) Camille Saint-Saëns
(dedicated to Pablo Sarasate) (1835-1921)

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master
of Music degree for Mr. Zweifel.

It is not difficult to compose, but it is wonderfully
difficult to let the superfluous notes fall under the table.

- Brahms

PREFACE

The main body of this essay deals with the D Minor Sonata for Piano and Violin, Op. 108. An introductory chapter will provide a general stylistic study of the two earlier sonatas for piano and violin, together with a biographical background.

Unity and terseness of form were the guideposts by which Brahms modeled his mature works. The essay will endeavor to show all three sonatas in this light.

The second chapter will provide an analysis of the D Minor Sonata. Part One serves as a short biographical introduction, and Part Two lays out a formal plan of the sonata, together with its key structures. The main body of the Analysis is contained in Part Three - Motivic Development - as this was the chief means by which unity and terseness of form were obtained. This section will show the entire sonata to be built from the intervallic structure of the first four measures. A final section on Rhythm will discuss complexities and irregularities under the headings of Syncopation, Two against Three, Hemiola, and Change of Meter.

Appendices include a tabulated list of the chamber works of Brahms, arranged in chronological order, a poem on the "Thun Sonata", written by J. V. Widmann, intimate friend

of Brahms, and pertinent correspondence of Brahms with Clara Schumann and Elizabet von Herzogenberg concerning the D Minor Sonata, also arranged in chronological order.

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CHAPTER I

THE EARLIER PIANO AND VIOLIN SONATAS OF BRAHMS

Part One - G Major Sonata, Opus 78

Biography

"The few notes which I write during the winter are of absolutely no importance," Brahms once told his friend Heuberger regarding his summer compositions.¹ Winters were mostly taken up with concert tours and the conducting of his own works with different orchestras and choruses throughout Europe. It was during the summers that he devoted the greater part of his time to composition, and for these times which required peace and relative seclusion, Brahms chose the following retreats.²

1864 - 1872 Lichtenthal (near Clara Schumann)

1877 - 1880 Portschach-am-See (on the Worthersee near
the Italian border)

1884 - 1885 Mürzuzschlag in Styria

1886 - 1888 Höfstetten (on the Lake of Thun in
in Switzerland)

1880, 1882 Ischl

1889 - 1896 Ischl

¹H. S. Drinker, The Chamber Music of Brahms (Philadelphia: Elkan-Vogel, 1932), p. 13.

² Ibid.

Portschach-am-See is the resort to which the G Major Sonata, op. 78, belongs. On the beauty of this Corinthian holiday resort, Brahms wrote to Hanslick (famous critic of the Vienna Neue Freie Presse), saying, "So many melodies fly about one must be careful not to tread on them."³

The Sonata was written during the last of three summers at Portschach, along with the two pianoforte Rhapsodies, Op. 79.⁴ It was first tried by Brahms with Joachim at Joachim's summer residence in Aigen near Salzburg. The first public performance was given at the Hellmesberger Quartet concert in Vienna, November 20, 1879, by Brahms and Hellmesberger. The Sonata was published in 1880, and was given its introduction to the public at large in a concert tour conducted by Brahms and Joachim through the Austrian provinces, during February of the same year. Other early performances include the London premiere of February 2, with Hans von Bülow and Madame Norman-Neruda, and the first performance in Germany by Scholz and Himmelstoss at Breslau, February 24.⁵

It should be mentioned that the G Major Sonata was not the first attempt of Brahms at creating a duo Sonata for violin and piano. A Sonata in A Minor was actually completed before October 1853, when Brahms wrote to Joachim that Dr.

³ Florence May, The Life of Johannes Brahms, 2 vols. (London: W. Reeves, 1948), 2:531.

⁴ Most of the Second Symphony was written at Portschach in 1877, and to the summer of 1878 belong the Violin Concerto and the Eight Pianoforte Solos, Op. 76.

⁵ May, p. 545.

Schumann had suggested he publish it as Opus 5. According to Drinker, this Sonata was lent to Liszt during a visit with Brahms at Weimar in August, 1853. Liszt took the Sonata with him to play on a concert tour with the Hungarian violinist Remenyi,⁶ during which time the Sonata was lost. The only other record of this Sonata turned up in 1872, when Wasielewski showed Dietrich (Brahms' early colleague as a student of Schumann) the violin part of a sonata he had discovered. Dietrich recognized Brahms' handwriting immediately and believed it to belong to this lost work.⁷

Tovey suggests that as many as four sonatas were written and destroyed by Brahms before he began the one in G Major.⁸ It is well established that Brahms discarded many of his compositions when he felt they did not live up to his ideals. He once told his friend Joseph Widmann that he had destroyed twenty attempts at the string quartet form before the two of Opus 51 were published.⁹

Drinker maintains that of the three violin sonatas, the G Major Sonata was the most beloved by Brahms' musical intimates, Joachim, Clara Schumann, and Elizabet von Herzogenberg.¹⁰ Upon receiving the manuscript in the mail, Clara

⁶Brahms met Joachim through Remenyi, with whom he also toured during the early fifties. Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 5th ed., s.v. "Brahms", by Philip Radcliff.

⁷Drinker, p. 49.

⁸Cobbet's Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music, s.v. "The Chamber Music of Brahms", by D. F. Tovey, p. 176.

⁹Drinker, p. 14.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 49.

rushed a letter back to Brahms:

I must send a line to tell you how deeply excited I am over your sonata. It came today; of course I at once played it through, and at the end could not help bursting into tears of joy over it. After the first delicate charming movement and the second, you can imagine my rapture, when in the third I once more found my passionately loved melody with the delightful quaver rhythm.¹¹

Later, she wrote (in a postcard to Brahms at Ischl dated June 16, 1890, her seventy-second year):

Joachim was here on the 8th (Robert's eightieth birthday) and for two days we had a lot of music. We played the Regenlieder Sonata again and I revelled in it once more. I always wish that the last movement might accompany me in my journey from here to the next world. Farewell, I hope you are well and happy. Ever yours, Cl. Sch.¹²

Elizabet von Herzogenberg, a former pupil of Brahms and life-long intimate friend, wrote to him:

You must be aware that it appeals to the affections as do few other things in the realm of music. You interpret it this way, that way, lose yourself in blissful dreaming as you listen to it, and become an enthusiast of the first order. The last movement in particular holds you enthralled, for the sound of it positively overflows, and you ask yourself whether it can be just this piece in G minor that so moves you, or something else that has taken possession of your inmost self, unknown to you. And then there is that dear - ♩, which almost deludes you every time into thinking that Brahms "discovered" the dotted quaver. ...When I play the last page of the adagio in E flat with the heavenly pedal note, getting slower and slower to make it last longer, I always feel you must be a good sort after all.¹³

Even Herr von Herzogenberg, in his letter of grief to Brahms over the death of his beloved wife, capped the first

¹¹Ibid., p. 50.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Max Kalbeck, ed., Johannes Brahms; the Herzogenberg Correspondence, 2 vols. (Freeport N.Y.: Books for Libraries Press, 1972), 2:404.

paragraph with the opening phrase of the Sonata.¹⁴ Billroth (famous surgeon and intimate friend of Brahms) wrote that "...if it were played as we hear it with our inner ear, we should be unable to restrain our tears."¹⁵

Immediate success was not gained in every circle, and after the first English performance, the following review appeared in the London Times (February 4, 1880):

Compared with Brahms' usual style, the work is moderate in length and simple in structure; but nevertheless there are subtleties of treatment and nuances of emphasis which can be fully appreciated only after better acquaintance with the general design.¹⁶

The London Daily News of the same date contained stronger criticism.

Like most of his music, the work altogether displays a tendency to prolongation and diffuseness of treatment out of all proportion to the interest of the subject matter. Excessive iteration is a characteristic of this composer, as of most others of the new German school. This tendency, it may be said, is also largely observable in one of the great masters of the earlier half of this century - Franz Schubert. In his case, however, the exquisite beauty and unforced flow of his musical ideas render any amount of tautology welcome. The same cannot be said of most of the ambitious producers of the present day, most of whose works would be more correctly classed as manufacture (technically skillful) rather than composition, many of them claiming a lengthened attention such as cultivated taste and knowledge can only willingly accord to thought of a much higher order than that displayed by the new race of composers.¹⁷

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Drinker, p. 50.

¹⁶Edwin Evans, Handbook to the Chamber and Orchestral Music of Johannes Brahms (London: W. Reeves Ltd., 1933-35), p. 60.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 61.

Study

Daniel Gregory Mason considers the last twelve chamber works - from the G Major Violin Sonata to the Clarinet Sonatas - as exemplifying Brahms at his most complete mastery. Here, "sentiment and skill are at last in perfect balance, the forces of growth and decay reach for the brief moment of prime their precarious equilibrium. ...he comes as near perfection as human limitations permit."¹⁸

Geiringer describes the G Major Sonata as "a composition full of restrained sweetness and that yearning tenderness which - as so often in Brahms - seems to smile through tears."¹⁹

The form of the Sonata is terse, but the quality of expression throughout is that of tenderness, the development of the first movement being the only section that could be called "passionate". A *cantabile* style predominates, with the violin generally taking the lead. The transparent role taken by the piano helps to solve the problem of balance that this combination of instruments so often displays.

Vivace ma non troppo

The opening motive, with the famous repeated D's (three times), and the gently falling line to the lower D, is employed cyclically in all three movements, dominating the

¹⁸ D. G. Mason, The Chamber Music of Brahms (New York: Macmillan, 1933), p. 129.

¹⁹ Karl Geiringer, Brahms: his Life and Works (New York: Oxford, 1947), p. 216.

entire Sonata.

Several peculiarities enhance the pastoral quality of the first theme. The principal motives begin each time on weak beats of the bar, providing a rhythmic hesitation in keeping with the intimate atmosphere. As in so many of Brahms' melodies, the chief tones are taken from the central chords of the key - in this case, tonic for the first two measures, subdominant for the third and tonic again for the fourth measure.

Johannes Brahms, Op. 79
(Veröffentlicht 1880)

Vivace ma non troppo

Violine *p. m. v.*

Pianoforte *p. m. v. dolce*

Ex. 1 I:1-4

The second part of the theme (bars 11-20) provides further rhythmic interest with its characteristic use of hemiola, so that the violin melody is felt in rhythmical groupings of three beats to a measure, pitted against the duple character of the piano part.

Ex. 2 I:11-12

As the musical drama unfolds, the theme is given a new emphasis with its lively dialogue between the two instruments (bars 20-24). The imitations themselves become more compact and intense as the third rising motive is imitated in increasingly quick succession (bars 25-27), until it is released and the original calm restored in a short passage before the appearance of the Second Subject.

The image displays a musical score for two staves, piano and violin, across three systems. The first system (measures 20-24) shows a lively dialogue between the instruments. The second system (measures 25-27) features increasingly quick succession of the third rising motive. The third system (measures 28-31) shows the original calm restored before the appearance of the Second Subject.

Ex. 3 I:20-31

Brahms reverses the same procedure toward the end of the movement, broadening and simplifying the theme at the passage *in tempo e poco a poco crescendo*. Here, the harmonies change more slowly, and, by giving the first motive to the second beat of the measure instead of the fifth, the high D can linger serenely before it falls.



Ex. 4 I: 223-228

Adagio

Tovey describes the mood of this movement as "solemn, dramatic."²⁰ It is a highly developed A-B-A movement, based on a broad, hymn-like theme in E flat major, nine measures long. The first six notes provide the core motive, followed by a response suggesting a horn call with its perfect fifth intervals.



Ex. 5 II: 1-3

²⁰Tovey, p. 176.

This opening motive, which begins seriously but calmly, blossoms to a soaring climax upon its return at the end of the movement (as in the first movement). Likewise, the "horn-call" effect is transformed into a majestic coda.

Where the downward curve of the first motive suggests that of the opening motive in the Sonata, the section marked *più andante* directly assumes the rhythm of the three reiterated notes.



Ex. 6 II:24-29

Tension mounts in the usual manner of which Brahms is fond - imitation and the rhythmic complexity of duple against triple time - both instruments fighting towards a climax on the dominant chord of D minor (bar 57). There follows one of Brahms' exquisite, ethereal passages (bars 57-67), where the cyclic motive, now back in its subdued state, is transformed in rising imitation through various registers of the piano. This is capped by the suggestion in the violin part (double-stopped thirds) of the opening Adagio theme. So subtle is the way prepared -- the pensive modulations, the hesitant rhythmic flow, then the pause. "It is one of Brahms' most finely conceived 'preparations'," says

Mason, "leading us so gently yet so firmly up to the very brink of the returning theme."²¹



Ex. 7 II:57-67

Each time the theme returns it is nobler than before, and with each interlude the iridescent quality becomes more beautiful. In the last interlude (bars 91-109) the violin is suspended over a tonic pedal in the bass (again, reiterated by the cyclic motive), capturing and holding for thirteen measures what can only be described as the essence of magical beauty.



²¹Mason, p. 133.



Ex. 8 II:91-109

The theme, now in its noblest form, surges forward in a *poco stringendo* to the climactic three notes of measure 114, and the movement comes to a quiet close - "horn-call" violin double-stops over tender pianoforte arabesques.

It is interesting to point out that Dr. Hanslick found the Adagio, together with the first movement, to lack sufficient freedom and originality, and that the stream of feeling appeared to be held back. He found Brahms "...fond of obliterating the contours of the melodies and of the rhythm by frequent means of rhythmic delay; so that in the Adagio the hearer sometimes feels uncertain where the strong part of the bar falls."²²

The passing of time sheds a far different light upon those qualities which Dr. Hanslick regretted. We may consider that it is precisely those qualities of rhythmic

²²Evans, p. 65.

delay - phrase extension, interrupted cadence, overlapping - that enhance the ethereal quality which this movement so beautifully displays.

Allegro Molto Moderato

The theme of this movement represents a rare instance where Brahms took suggestions from an external phenomenon - here, a musical picture of dropping rain.²³ The theme, along with its accompaniment, is suggested from two songs, Regenlied and Nachklang, Op. 59, no. 3, 4, written six years earlier in the summer of 1873. The songs are based on a pair of poems by Klaus Groth.

3. Regenlied

Klaus Groth

In mäßiger, ruhiger Bewegung

Singstimme

Pianoforte

Wal - le,

Re - . . . gen, wal - le - nie - . . . der, we - cke - mir die räu - . . . me wie - der,

m.g.

²³ Another instance where he does this is the vivid picture of waves breaking on a stormy beach in the accompaniment to the song, Verzagen. Grove's Dictionary, 2d ed., s.v. "Brahms", by J. A. Fuller - Maitland, p. 387.

4. Nachklang

Klaus Groth

Sanft bewegt

Singstimme

Re . gen . trop . fen aus den Bäu . men

Pianoforte

p

fal . len in das grü . ne Gras,

m.g.

p

Ex. 9 Regenlied, Nachklang, Op. 59, no. 3,4

Walle, Regen walle nieder,
 Wecke meine alten Lieder,
 Die wir in der Türe sangen
 Wenn die Tropfen draussen klangen!
 Mochte ihnen wieder lauschen
 Ihrem sussen, feuchten Rauschen,
 Meine Seele sanft betauen
 Mit dem frommen Kindergrauen.

-Regenlied, second stanza.

Stream down, rain; awaken my
 old songs, which we used to
 sing at the door when the drops
 were pattering outside. Would
 that I could listen to you again,
 hear your sweet splashing, and
 steep my soul softly in the holy
 awe of childhood.²⁴

The continuation each time the theme occurs is different - at the beginning only the first two measures are taken directly from the songs - the following two measures take the melody to a cadence on the dominant. Only at the

²⁴Walter Niemann, Brahms (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1929), p. 258.

last appearance does the theme get quoted throughout exactly as it appears in the songs, with the original cadence ending on the sub-median, E flat.

Brahms makes use of the slow movement theme for the subject of the second episode. But rather than a copy of the theme in the notation of the new movement, only the first six notes are repeated, with a new continuation given to make it what Tovey describes, "not only the warmest but the most urgent theme in the finale."²⁵ The "horn-call" motive of the Adagio is also varied in this passage, with its pianoforte transformation into the sixteenth-note falling rain pattern.



Ex. 10 III:83-89

The Coda summarizes the entire sonata with beautiful simplicity. The cyclic motive of the iambic rhythmic figure makes its lofty and final appearance, rising

²⁵Tovey, p. 176.

in imitation between the two instruments, each time its resolution more tender than the one before. Only at this moment in the finale does it appear in the major, and its rhythm is augmented as if to suspend the magic in one long breath.



Ex. 11 III:159-164

Part Two - Sonata In A Major, Opus 100

Biography

The three summers of 1886-88, during which time the A Major and D Minor Sonatas were composed, were spent in one of the truly most spectacular beauty spots of the world. Brahms had made a friend during the summer of 1874 when he attended a Swiss music festival in Winterthür, where his Triumphlied was performed. The new friend, Joseph Victor Widmann, was a poet from Berne, and the two made their acquaintance at a dinner party given by Hermann Goetz.²⁶ Over the years, Widmann became one of the most intimate friends of Brahms, and, save for a brief rupture over a political dispute, they remained close until Brahms' death.

So it was that Brahms came to spend these summer holidays in the little village of Höfstetten²⁷ near Berne. In order to be undisturbed, he rented the entire first floor of a large brown house with green shutters, situated just opposite to the point where the river Aare flows out of the Lake of Thun.²⁸ His windows overlooked the majestic glaciers of the famous triumvirate peaks, the Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau.

²⁶A. Dietrich and J. V. Widmann, Recollections of Johannes Brahms, trans. Dora Hecht (London: Seeley, 1899), p. 95.

²⁷The village of Höfstetten is now a part of Thun.

²⁸It is to this lake that the A Major Sonata owes its popular title, "The Thun Sonata."

On his first impressions of Thun, Brahms wrote to Billroth:

Now let me tell you that I am very happy that I came here. The decision was difficult, but I wanted once more to be in Switzerland. You have no conception how beautiful and how comfortable it is here in every respect. You can imagine what belongs to all this - a charming place to live in, beautiful places to walk, good restaurants and pleasant people, who, coming from Berne, see to it that we have excellent lectures, etc., etc...

- Thun, 22 July, 1886²⁹

To Henschel, his enthusiasm invoked this remark which comprises the entire letter:

Menuetto grazioso da capo e poi lo stesso con variazioni e ancora dal segno e da capo con repetizione, etc.
...Cordiali saluti!

- August, 1887³⁰

Brahms' summer activities included faithful weekend trips to the Widmann home in Berne, where he would stay from Saturday until Monday. Many books were borrowed from Widmann-- new books of history and travel, Gottfried Keller's novels and poems, engravings and photographs of Italian works of art - carried in a leather bag slung over his shoulder, to be returned the following week and exchanged for more. Brahms made many trips to the summer theater in Berne, and oftentimes he undertook mountain tours with Widmann. These tours

²⁹Theodor Billroth, Brahms and Billroth Letters, trans. Hans Barkan (Berlin: Urban, 1935), p. 187.

³⁰George Henschel, Personal Recollections of Johannes Brahms (Boston: R. G. Badger, 1907), p. 90.

were conducted throughout the beautiful Berner Oberland, and it was not uncommon for the two lovers of nature to hike from Kandersteg to the Oschinensee at the foot of the Blumlisalp, or to take the steep trail around the cliffs up to the high alpine village of Mürren.³¹

To the summer of 1886 belong three chamber works - the Sonata for piano and 'cello in F Major, op. 99, the violin Sonata in A Major, op. 100, and the Trio in C Minor, op. 101. All were first tried out at Widmann's house.³² First public performances were given the same year as follows:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| F Major Cello Sonata | - Brahms with Hausmann, Vienna, November 24. |
| A Major Violin Sonata | - Brahms with Hellmesberger, Hellmesberger Quartet concert in Vienna, December 2. |
| C Minor Trio | - Brahms with Hubay and Popper in Budapest, December. ³³ |

The violin sonata is sometimes called the Meistersinger Sonata, as its first three notes bear a resemblance to Walther's Preislied in Wagner's Meistersinger. The comparison may be dismissed as irrelevant when it is considered that Wagner himself defined plagiarism as having "more than four syllables."³⁴ Brahms had no patience with people who deliberated over petty similarities. To someone who commented that the C Major theme in the finale movement of the First

³¹ Widmann, p. 131.

³² Ibid., p. 121.

³³ May, p. 591.

³⁴ Tovey, p. 178.

Symphony was unfortunately similar to the "Joy" theme in Beethoven's Ninth, Brahms retorted, "Any ass could see that!" And when the composer Dessof apologized to him for the resemblance of a theme to one of Brahms' symphonies, Brahms wrote to him, "Plagiarism is one of the stupidest topics of stupid people. You have made into one of your freshest themes what was only an accessory detail in my work."³⁵

As with the G Major Sonata, intimate friends of Brahms expressed their delight. Elizabet von Herzogenberg wrote to Brahms, "...what a charming, happy inspiration of yours it is! The whole piece is one caress... The first movement is so clear and sunny, the pastorale in the second so lovely (we played it quite beautifully straight away), and the third will end by becoming my favourite."³⁶

Billroth reacted in the following manner:

The violin sonata is of unending grace, charm, and lovely feeling - a darling child, so sweet and dear, just to be kissed all over! ...Chiefly I find that, because of the concise form of these compositions and their transparent clearness, you have done something very great, for you show that these deep, warm, beautiful, and earnest emotions can also be obtained in a small frame.³⁷

Widmann wrote a poem on the "Thun Sonata," which is included in Appendix Two (pp. 120, 121) because of the importance which Brahms attached to it. Brahms was so fond of the poem that he had it printed for private circulation, and even asked Widmann for more copies one year before his death.

³⁵Drinker, p. 70.

³⁶Herzogenberg Correspondence, p. 298.

³⁷Billroth, p. 180.

Study

The A Major Sonata is one of Brahms' most melodious works, and bears a close affinity to the G Major Sonata. Where the earlier work is thoroughly intimate in its style and writing, the second Sonata reflects a mood of tenderness and serene happiness, unified throughout. Its idyllic beauty lies in the qualifying adjectives given by Brahms to the title of each movement - Allegro amabile, Andante tranquillo, Allegretto grazioso.

Allegro amabile

In contrast to the G Major Sonata where the violin generally takes the lead, the piano dominates this movement. Not only does it introduce both themes, but it assumes the commanding role in their development.

The First Subject consists of four *five*-measure phrases, creating a duple character with an added measure to provide an echo of each fourth measure (first three phrases). While each of the "extra" measures in the first three phrases serves as an echo, the fourth measure of the last phrase takes the form of an extension, balancing the symmetrical structure of the sentence. Perhaps it is because of this peculiarity that Brahms decides to repeat the First Subject in the Exposition (and giving it smaller space in its return), as he does not repeat the main Subjects in either first movement Exposition of the other two sonatas.

Pianoforte

Ex. 12 I:1-20

The Second Subject transforms another song of Klaus Groth, this time from Opus 105, Wie Melodien zieht es mir.³⁸

³⁸Though published two years later, the song was composed before the sonata, and bears the same relation as does Regenlied to the G Major Sonata. Ed. note, Herzogenberg Correspondence, p. 298.

1. Wie Melodien zieht es mir

Klaus Groth

Singstimme *Zart*

Wie Me-lo-di-en zieht es mir lei-se durch den

Pianoforte *p sempre dolce*

Ex. 13 Wie Melodien

The theme opens with a tender upbeat not unlike the pick-up motive of the G Major Sonata, only this time without the dotted rhythmic figure.³⁹ The second half of each measure resolves a previous suspension, while at the same time creating a new one, providing harmonic colouring and rhythmic continuity at the same time. The suspensions become increasingly tense as the theme proceeds, and by measure 59, a new and emphatic motive is derived in a double-dotted quarter and sixteenth-note figure. Most of the later development depends upon this motive.

³⁹The ensuing violin statement does use the dotted rhythmic figure.



Ex. 14 I:50-59

A developmental theme foreshadows the D Minor Sonata with its G sharp bass pedal, extended over thirteen measures. It presents itself in an intricate play of canon, first between the two instruments, then in the piano alone. As it diminishes and tapers off, the two instruments exchange the bass pedal.



Ex. 15 I:124-136

This theme is transformed into an elaborate *cantabile* (bars 137-157) before the Recapitulation.

137

141

144

150

154

dolce

dolce

piu p

dim

Ex. 16 I:137-157

Andante tranquillo

The middle movement is a combination of andante and scherzo, "a counterpart in pastoral comedy to the sublime mystery of the slow movement of the F Major String Quintet", as Tovey describes.⁴⁰ In the earliest biography of Brahms - written at a time when the latest completed composition was the C Minor Trio, op. 101 - Hermann Deiters commented on its success: "The result of this experiment is exceedingly happy, and the alternation of wild gaiety with passionate earnestness is managed with infinite skill".⁴¹ Clara Schumann was not so happy with the movement, as she felt it to be reflective, with not enough genuine feeling. (Letter of June, 1887.) The Herzogenbergs were also hesitant:

We fell in love with it (the Sonata) on the spot, of course. At first I did not quite like the idea of the lovely F Major lady's betrothal to that melancholy Norwegian jester; however - so long as the union turns out well, and they have plenty of children!⁴²

In spite of the change in mood between alternating sections, a strong affinity can be found between their melodic structures. The two themes are also unified through their metrical relation. The harmony of the Andante tranquillo implies a unit of eighth-note movement (though notated in 2/4 meter), while the Vivace, in 3/4 time, implies

⁴⁰Tovey, p. 178.

⁴¹Hermann Deiters, Johannes Brahms, abr. trans. Rosa Newmarch (London: Unwin, 1888) p. 152.

⁴²Herzogenberg Correspondence, pp. 303, 4.

a harmonic rhythm of one beat to the bar, equalling the eighth-note beat of the slow section.

a. *Andante tranquillo*
p dolce

b. *Vivace*
p molto leggero

Ex. 17 II:1-3; 16-19

The Andante section appears three times, each with a different continuation of melody, as in the Rondo of the G Major Sonata. The cadence of each slow section pauses with a question, to which its very same notes (A and D) are answered in the fast section.

a. *Vivace*
p molto leggero

b. *Vivace di più*
pizz
p ma marc
p legg

Ex. 18 II:14-17; 92-95

With the final appearance of the Andante the questioning cadence is even more hesitant. The A and the D now sound in the weak beats of the piano part only, and the rhythmic movement of the violin in double-stops slows to half-note values.



Ex. 19 II:160-163

Allegretto grazioso

The last movement has sometimes been criticized as being too concise. Florence May once confided this complaint to Joachim, who did not agree, saying the Coda was originally considerably longer. He went on to say, "Brahms told me he had cut a good deal away; he always aimed at condensation."⁴³

As in the first movement, Brahms reminisces about his songs of Opus 105, and here there is a touch of Auf dem Kirchhofe, no. 4.

⁴³May, p. 592.

a.

4. Auf dem Kirchhofe

Delliv von Liliencron

Mäßig
Andante moderato

Singstimme

Pianoforte

Der Tag ging regenschwer und sturmbewegt, ich war an manch ver. geßnem Grab ge.

b.

Ex. 20 Auf dem Kirchhofe 1-9; III:31-35

The form is regular and simple - a Rondo, as in the G Major Finale, only this time its recurring Subject is a heroic *cantabile* full of confidence, exploiting the richness of the lower range strings of the violin.

The First Middle-Subject is haunted by an elaborate display of diminished seventh arpeggios in the piano, giving it a very dramatic effect. (See example 20b.)

The Second Middle-Subject appears after the return of the main theme. Not only does it achieve the fullest development in the Rondo, it also provides the principal material for the Coda. Its first introduction is over a suspensive harmony, while only a few bars later it achieves a heavy appearance over the tonic of F sharp minor. From here on the uncertainty of this motive increasingly forshadows the exuberance of the main theme.

a.



b.



Ex. 21 III:89-93; 102-103

The two most important motives are finally juxtaposed in the Coda, providing a subtle combination of the uncertainty of the Second Middle-Subject with the confidence of the main theme.



Ex. 22 III:146-150

With full assurance the victorious and heroic main theme plunges to an end, supported by the richness of thirds, sixths and octave double-stops of the violin.

As so often in the Brahmsian codas, it is only in this last incarnation that the theme reveals its full individuality, as an old man, even in his failing strength, seems sometimes more fully himself than he ever could be in the thoughtless overflowing energy of youth.⁴⁴

⁴⁴Mason, p. 176.

CHAPTER II

ANALYSIS OF THE D MINOR SONATA

Part One - Biography

The second and third summers in Thun were spent in much the same manner as the first summer of 1886.¹ Perhaps the chief difference lay in the fact that the circle of friends around Brahms and Widmann grew larger every year. These friends included the Landgrave of Hesse, Professor Edward Hanslick from Vienna, Professor Gustav Wendt, Gottfried Keller, Professor Bachthold, Hermine Spiess (mezzo-soprano with whom Brahms often enjoyed making music), the Hegars, Max Kalbeck, Steiner, and Claus Groth. A political argument with Widmann may have influenced Brahms' mood during the last few weeks of the summer of '88.

The D Minor Sonata was dedicated to Hans von Bülow, close friend of Brahms, in return for Bülow's enthusiastic support (both as pianist and conductor) to the later phases of Brahms' work.

Brahms was indebted to von Bülow for his recognition of Brahms as a symphonist during his own lifetime. Von Bülow was a superb musician who paid attention to every detail in

¹For further biographical detail see pp. 17-19.

his scores, and demanded highest quality from his players. Under his conductorship, the orchestra at the Court of Meiningen became world-famous. The music of Brahms was always given highest priority in his choice of programming, and he was not averse to repeating new works on the same program.²

There is some controversy as to exactly when the D Minor Sonata was composed. Max Kalbeck said it had been completed at Thun as early as in 1886, Brahms choosing to hold it back before it was actually published in 1889.³

The first manuscript performance of the Sonata was given by Brahms with Hubay (famous Hungarian violinist) in Vienna, December 22, 1888.⁴ Brahms and Joachim gave the second public performance at Joachim's Vienna concert of February 13, 1889.⁵ The Sonata was published that spring, and performed immediately after in London by Fanny Davies and Ludwig Straus, at Miss Davies' concert of May 7. All three Sonatas were played the same summer, at a special evening concert given by Brahms and Joachim in Gmunden, for the Queen and Royal Family of Hanover.⁶

² Richard Specht, Brahms (London: Dent, 1930), p. 247.

³ Max Kalbeck footnote in The Herzogenberg Correspondence, p. 351.

⁴ Geiringer, p. 158.

⁵ Florence May cites this as the first performance, p. 613.

⁶ May, p. 613.

Pertinent correspondence concerning the D Minor Sonata, written between Brahms and his intimate friends, Elizabet von Herzogenberg and Clara Schumann, is included in Appendix Three(pp. 122-128), arranged in chronological order.

Part Two - Structure

Allegro

Sonata - Allegro Form

	<u>Keys</u>	<u>Measures</u>
EXPOSITION (bars 1-83)		
<u>First Subject</u> , A (bars 1-24) ⁷	D Minor	
A ₁		1-8
A ₂		9-21
a (bars 9-11)		
b (bars 11-12)		
a expanded (bars 13-16)		
b expanded (bars 16-21)		
Cadence		22-24
<u>Bridge</u> (bars 24-48)	Modulatory	
Bridge I		24-34
a (bars 24-30)		
b (bars 30-34)	Neopolitan (plagal) re- relationships emphasized	
Bridge II		34-40
a (bars 34-38)		
a extended (bars 38-40)		
Bridge III		40-47
a (bars 40-44)		
derived from A ₂ ,		
meas. 15 & 19		
b (bars 44-47)		
Cadence		47

⁷ All Subject and secondary Bridge divisions are intended for identification convenience, and are not to be regarded as separate entities.

	<u>Keys</u>	<u>Measures</u>
<u>Second Subject</u> , B (bars 48-74)	F Major	
B ₁ Piano statement	Derivation of Bridge Ib plag- al relationships	48-56
Transition (Bridge III in piano, inverted and im- itated by violin)		56-61
B ₁ Violin statement, ex- tended in meas. 67-70		62-74
<u>Codetta</u>		74-83
DEVELOPMENT (bars 84-129)	(Dominant bass pedal throughout)	
<u>Development I</u> Motivic develop- ment of germ theme motives	D Minor	84-95
<u>Development II</u> Modified repeat of Development I	A Minor	96-107
<u>Development III</u> Motive tran- quilization	Modulatory	108-119
<u>Development IV</u> Retransition	Dominant preparation	120-129
RECAPITULATION (bars 130-217)		
<u>First Subject</u> , A (bars 130-153)	D Minor	
A ₁		130-137
A ₂		138-150
Cadence		150-153
<u>Bridge</u> (bars 153-185)	Modulatory	
Bridge I		153-172
a (bars 153-157)		
a transformed (bars 157-168)		
b (bars 168-172)		

	<u>Keys</u>	<u>Measures</u>
Bridge II		172-178
a (bars 172-176		
a extended		
(bars 176-178)		
Bridge III		178-185
a (bars 178-182)		
b (bars 182-185)		
Cadence		185
<u>Second Subject, B</u>	D Major	
(bars 186-208)		
B ₁ Piano statement		186-194
Transition		194-199
B ₁ Violin statement, ex-		200-208
panded and transformed		
in bars 204-208		
<u>Bridge</u> (bars 208-218)	Modulatory	
Bridge IV (material from		208-218
<u>Codetta</u> -bars		
74-83- and		
expansion of		
Bridge Ia)		
CODA (bars 218-264)		
<u>First Subject, A</u> (bars 218-236)	D Minor	
A ₁ modified		218-225
A ₂ (expansion of A ₂ ,		226-233
section a omitted)		
Cadence		233-236
<u>Development</u> , abridged	Tonic bass	236-257
	pedal	
	G Minor	
<u>Closing Cadence</u> (material	D Minor	258-264
from A ₁)	D Major	

Adagio

A-B-A Form & Coda

	<u>Keys</u>	<u>Measures</u>
<u>Subject</u> , A (bars 1-24)	D Major	
A ₁		1-9
A ₂		9-12
A ₃		13-18
A ₄		18-24
<u>Transition</u> , B		25-36
<u>Subject</u> , A (bars 37-66)		
A ₁ abridged (second half only)		37-41
A ₂ expanded in measures 43-44		41-46
A ₃ abridged (cadence only)		46-50
A ₄ extended, measures 57-66		50-66
<u>Coda</u> (bars 67-75)		
A ₁ abridged		67-70
Cadence		71-75

Un Poco Presto e Con Sentimento

A-B-A Form & Coda

	<u>Keys</u>	<u>Measures</u>
<u>Principal Section, A (bars 1-64)</u>		
A ₁	F# Minor A Major	1-16
A ₂	E Major C# Minor	17-25
Bridge I	Modulatory	25-28
A ₁ modified	F# Minor A Major	29-44
A ₂ modified in piano	E Major C# Minor	45-53
Bridge II (transformation of Bridge I)	A Major	53-64
<u>Middle Section, B Developmental (bars 64-118)</u>		
B ₁ syncopated sequence	Modulatory	64-69
A ₁ modified and abridged	A Minor	69-75
Bridge II, modified	F Minor	75-86
B ₁ modified	F Minor	86-91
A ₁ modified and extended	F Minor F Major	91-110
Retransition	Modulatory	111-119
<u>Principal Section, A (bars 119-181)</u>		
A ₁ modified	F# Minor A Major	119-134
A ₂ modified	E Major D Major F# Minor	135-143

	<u>Keys</u>	<u>Measures</u>
<u>Principal Section, A (Cont'd.)</u>		
Bridge I modified and extended by one-half measure	F# Minor	143-147
Bridge III	F# Minor	147-155
<u>Coda</u> , Material from A ₁	F# Minor	155-181

Presto AgitatoModified Sonata - Allegro Form

	<u>Keys</u>	<u>Measures</u>
EXPOSITION (bars 1-129)		
<u>First Subject, A</u> (bars 1-16)		
A ₁	D Minor	1-4
A ₂	D Minor G Minor	5-13
A ₁ modified	D Minor	13-16
<u>Bridge I</u>	Modulatory	17-38
<u>Second Subject, B</u> (bars 39-72)		
B ₁	C Major E Minor	39-54
B ₂	F Major	55-60
B ₁ modified	F Major A Minor	61-72
<u>Bridge II</u>	A Minor	73-76
<u>Third Subject, C</u> (bars 76-107)		
C ₁		76-96
C ₂		96-104
C ₃		104-107
<u>Bridge II</u> modified and extended	A Minor	107-113
<u>First Subject, A</u> (bars 114-129)		
A ₁ modified	A Minor	107-113
A ₂ modified	D Minor	118-126
A ₁ modified	G Minor	126-129

	<u>Keys</u>	<u>Measures</u>
DEVELOPMENT - RECAPITULATION (bars 130-310)		
<u>First Subject, A Developmental</u> (bars 130-194)		
A ₂ fugal development of skeletal outline	G Minor B ^b Minor C# Minor	130-157
Transition	Modulatory	158-171
A ₂ development of triplet figure	F Minor Modulatory	171-194
<u>Bridge I</u> modified and extended by two measures. Emergence of pedal bass from the Develop- ment Section of the opening <u>Allegro</u> .	Modulatory	194-217
<u>Second Subject, B</u> (bars 218-251)		
B ₁	F Major A Minor	218-233
B ₂	B ^b Major D Minor	234-251
<u>Bridge II</u> , modified	D Minor	252-255
<u>Third Subject, C</u> (bars 225-286)		
C ₁		255-275
C ₂		275-283
C ₃		283-286
<u>Bridge II</u> , modified and extended	D Minor	286-292
<u>First Subject</u> (bars 293-310)		
A ₁	D Minor	293-296
A ₂ extended	D Minor G Minor	297-307
A ₁ modified	G Minor	307-310
<u>Coda</u>	D Minor	311-337

Part Three - Motivic Development

Allegro

EXPOSITION

First Subject

The first four measures provide the basis for motivic development throughout the entire Sonata. Six intervallic motives are to be found, as illustrated by the following example:

Violine
Allegro
p sotto voce ma espressivo
3rd 3rd

Pianoforte
p sotto voce
3rd 3rd
4th 4th

① 4th
② 4th
③ (neighboring tone)
④ 4th
⑤ 4th
⑥ 4th

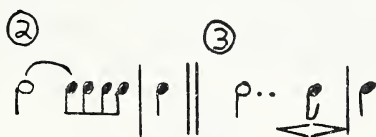
Ex. 23 I:1-4

Stripped of their rhythmic structure and transposed to the same pitch range, the motives may be seen as follows:

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥

Ex. 24 Motives 1-6

The rhythmic shapes of Motives 2 and 3 also play an important part in the motivic development, together with the dynamic swell of Motive 3.



Ex. 25 Rhythmic shapes of motives 2 and 3.

Because of its developmental power, the first four measures will hereafter be referred to as the "germ theme."⁸

Measures 5-8 are basically a repetition of the germ theme, varied by the transformation of Motive 1 to a major third from a perfect fourth (bars 5-6). The bass line of measures 7 and 8 represents expanded transformations of Motive 1, in that the intervals of a perfect fourth have been inverted to those of a perfect fifth.



Ex. 26 I:5-8

⁸ A term coined by Richard Shaw Fischer in "Brahms' Technique of Motive Development in his Sonata in D Minor for Piano and Violin, Opus 108" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Arizona, 1964), p. 11.

Section "a" of the theme A_2 (bars 9-11; 13-16) is based on the rhythmic shapes of Motives 2 and 3. While the violin part of measures 9, 13, and 14 exposes the rhythmic shape of Motive 2 in its original form, the same part in measures 10 and 15 alters the rhythmic shape of Motive 3.



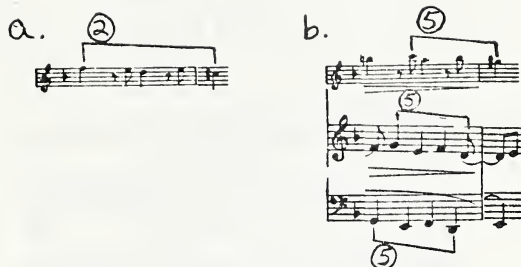
Ex. 27 I:9-10, violin

Though the rhythmic shape of Motive 2 is left intact in measures 9, 13 and 14, its intervals are transformed. The outer notes of the motive are inverted in measures 9 and 13 from an interval of a perfect fourth to a diminished fourth, while in measure 14, the interval is expanded to an augmented fourth.



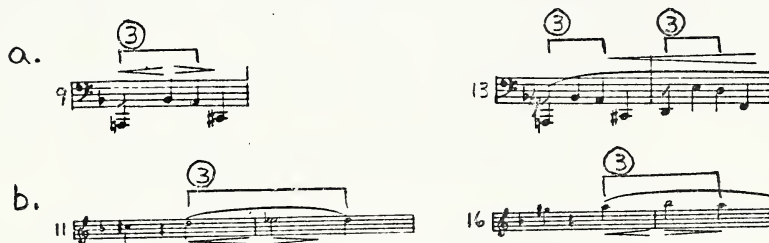
Ex. 28 I:13-14, violin

In measure 10, the violin part provides a transposed intervallic variation of Motive 2, while its corresponding measure (bar 15) transposes and varies Motive 5. This variation can also be seen in the bass line.



Ex. 29 I:10-11, violin; 15-16

A variation of Motive 3 in the bass line of measures 9, 13, and 14 (hidden by its displacement of an octave) prepares the way for the inverted variation of Motive 3 in the two sections of the theme A_2 , part "b" (bars 11-12; 16-21). The dynamic swell of Motive 3 has been retained in both sections, including the expanded measures 18-21.



Ex. 30 I:9, 13, 14; } violin
11-12, 16-17 }

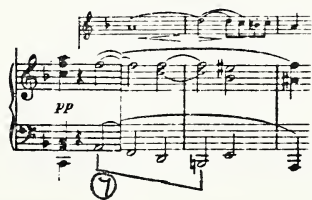
These expanded measures (bars 18-21) reveal further motivic concentration. While the first five notes of the melodic line form a rhythmic augmentation of Motive 2, Motive 4 is represented simultaneously, both in the melodic line (omitting the last three beats of measure 19), and in the bass.



Ex. 31 I:18-21

The First Subject comes to a close in measures 21-24 with a brief return of the germ theme. The original bass line has been replaced with a new bass line (perhaps because of its appearance preceding the cadence) characteristic of both Motives 4 and 5. The successive descent of four notes resembles Motive 4, while the descending series of thirds will play an important role in future motivic development, and will hereafter be labelled Motive 7.⁹

a.



b. ⑦

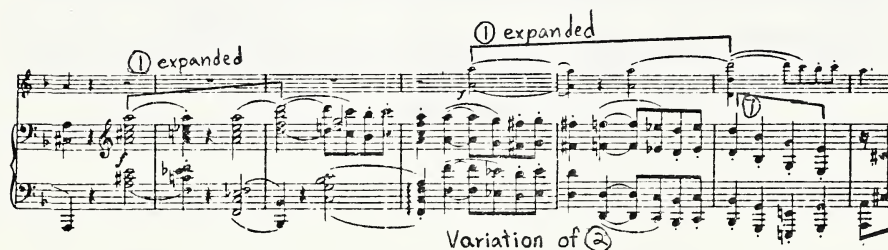


Ex. 32 I:21-24

⁹Fisher, p. 38

Bridge

While serving as transition, Bridge I develops contrapuntally the germ theme, expanding it from four measures to nine and one half (bars 24-34). The opening motive 1, expanded through repetition of its first note, is stated first by the piano, then followed three measures later by the violin. The piano continues its statement underneath the violin part (bars 27-30), based on transposed variations of Motive 2. The four descending quarter-notes of measure 29 represent a rhythmic diminution of Motive 7.



Ex. 33 I:24-30

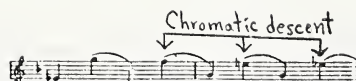
The second half of Bridge I (bars 30-34) is devoted to a contrapuntal treatment of Motive 3. In the first two measures, the violin part maintains its original pitch and intervallic contour, but, as in the opening statement of Bridge I, its first note is repeated. The piano inverts Motive 3 underneath, retaining the original accent marking on the middle note. Measures 32-33 are a transposed variation of measures 30-31.

An inverted and expanded transformation of Motive 7 makes three subtle appearances in this section (extending

three measures into the second bridge), and can be distinguished in both parts.

Ex. 34 I:30-36

While Bridge I develops the material of the opening theme, Bridge II is devoted to the development of the First Subject's A_2 theme. The major sixth descending intervals of measures 34 and 35 represent inverted and enharmonically changed variations of the diminished seventh intervals in measures 9 and 13, while the minor seventh interval of the same passage represents a modified inversion of the major seventh in measure 14. A further relation to the theme A_2 of the First Subject can be seen in the melodic line, with the chromatic descent of the top notes of each interval imitating the chromatic descent in measures 12-13 and 17-18.



Ex. 35 I:34-35, violin

A highly concentrated development of Motive 1 can also be found in the second Bridge, where an interlocking series of diminished fifths and augmented fourths serve to expand the motive.



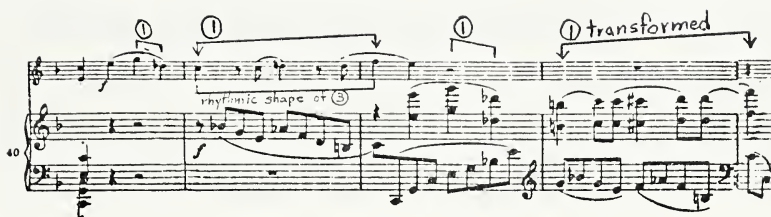
Ex. 36 I:36-37, violin

Three motives can be detected in the third Bridge, measures 40-47.

Motive 1 has now been restored to the perfect fourth interval, and is found between the first notes of measures 41 and 42 in the violin part. Its counterpart in the piano has been augmented to that of a diminished fifth, between the first notes of measures 43 and 44. This augmented form can also be seen in the violin part of measure 40, and in the piano, measure 42.

The rhythmically altered form of Motive 3 appearing in measures 10 and 15 makes its second appearance in measure 41 of the violin part.¹⁰ The piano varies this motive yet again in measure 43.

¹⁰For discussion of these measures, see pp. 45, 46 (example 29).



Ex. 37 I:40-44

A transposed outline of Motive 4 can be seen in the violin part of measures 44-46, between the alternate notes of the descending third pattern, while in measures 46 and 47, an abridged form of Motive 7 characterizes the descending cadential line.



Ex. 38 I:44-47

Second Subject

The melodic line of the Second Subject is based on the inverted forms of Motives 3 and 4. The first three measures (bars 48-50) represent exact inversions, while in bars 51 and 52, both motives are expanded. The final note of Motive 4 is raised to a perfect fourth (bar 52, first note), while the third note of Motive 3 is expanded from the original neighboring tone to an interval of a major third. Its

dynamic marking has also been increased from that of an accent in the germ theme to a *sforzando* on each appearance. Motive 3 can be seen in its uninverted form in the first three notes of the piano right hand, measure 49.

The bass line of measures 48-50 presents an outline of Motives 1 and 2 (with the exception of the final note), while the piano right hand of the same measures forms a rhythmic augmentation of Motive 2.

The image shows a handwritten musical score for measures 48-52. At the top, a diagram labeled "Rhythmic augmentation of ②" shows a sequence of notes with arrows indicating their rhythmic values. Below this, the main score is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The score includes various annotations: "③ inverted" and "④ inverted" above the treble staff, and "③" and "④ expanded" above the treble staff in measures 51 and 52. The bass staff has "①" and "②" below it in measures 48 and 49. The score is marked "espress." and "f".

Ex. 39 I:48-52

Motive 6 can be distinguished in the broad outline of the Second Subject melody, as well as in the inner accompanying parts. In the ascending melody of measures 48-53, its outline appears transposed, inverted, and retrograded, while the descending section between measures 52 and 56 present Motive 6 in its original transposed form. Several further variations appear in the inner parts.

Handwritten annotations in the score include "Inverted retrogression" with arrows pointing to specific measures in both staves. There are also circled numbers 6 in the piano part.

Ex. 40 I:48-56

A six-measure interlude between the two statements of the Second Subject (bars 56-61) presents a varied repetition of the Bridge III theme. The piano now plays the entire theme rather than the second half, and the violin adds colour with its melodic inversion of the first part of the theme in canonic imitation, measures 57-59. A further difference lies in the fact that dynamic swells have been added to the interlude, in keeping with the swells of the inverted Motive 3 which dominates the Second Subject.

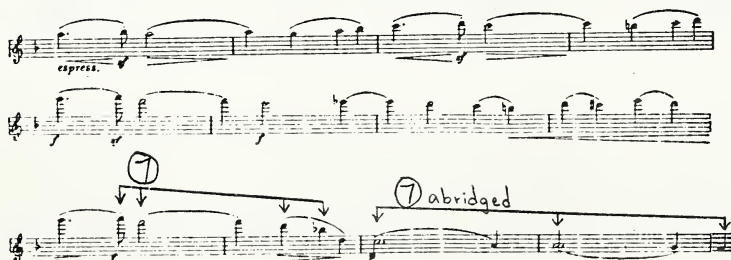
Ex. 41 I:56-61

As in the accompaniment to the opening statement of the Second Subject, the arpeggiated introduction to the violin statement (bar 61) again presents several examples of Motive 6, transposed, inverted, and retrogressed.



Ex. 42 I:61

The violin theme, now an octave higher, remains identical to the piano theme for the first five measures (bars 62-67). However, the descending chromatic scale of the piano statement (bars 53-54) is now augmented rhythmically, providing a phrase extension culminating in the repetition of the climactic measure 66.¹¹ Motive 7 emerges again in the melodic descent to the Codetta (bars 70-74).



Ex. 43 I:62-74, violin

¹¹For further discussion on the rhythmical complexity of this passage, see pp. 112, 113 (example 124).

Codetta

Inverted and expanded forms of Motives 7 and 5 can be seen in the Codetta. Motive 7 is exposed between the violin part and piano right hand in measures 76-77, where five successive thirds can be seen (counting augmented seconds as minor thirds). In measures 78-80, seven successive thirds appear. Motive 5 also appears twice in measures 74-79 of the violin part, the second time expanded through repetition of each two-note sequence.

a.

b.

Ex. 44 I:74-79, violin; 76-79

The bass line of the Codetta anticipates the Development section with its pedal tone on F throughout the entire ten-measure section.

Ex. 45 I:74-83

DEVELOPMENT

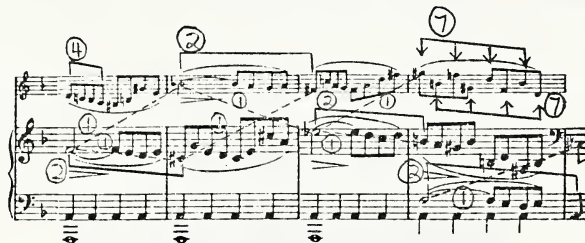
The Development is truly a phenomenon of Brahms' mature genius. Here the themes and motives are elaborated over an insistent pedal point A, extending over the entire 46 measure length of the Development.

The Development may be divided quite evenly into four sections. The first section (bars 84-95) develops the germ theme, while the Second section basically repeats section one in the dominant (bars 96-107). The third section (bars 108-119) acts as a transition in which the basic motives are tranquillized, and a descent to the Recapitulation characterizes the last section (bars 120-130).

In the first two measures of the Development I, the violin part ingeniously exploits two strings, so that five

1, both in its original and inverted, contracted form.

Further motivic development can be seen in the violin part of measure 88, where a rhythmic diminution of Motive 4 is presented. Two outlines of Motive 7 are exposed between the descending sixth intervals of measure 91.



Ex. 48 I:88-91

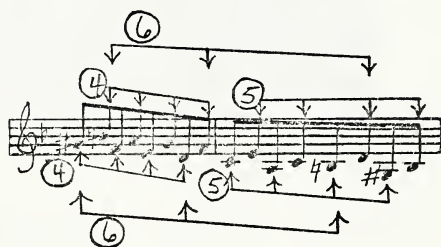
Motive 3 makes its appearance in the violin part of measures 92-95, again, in its original form, complete with rhythmic and dynamic contours. Serving as transition to the second section of the Development, these measures move forward from the dominant of D Minor to the tonic of A Major, then A Minor.



Ex. 49 I:92-96

The second section of the Development (measures 96-107) is basically a repetition of the first section, trans-

posed to the dominant and modified with a few slight alterations. A double development of Motives 4, 5, and 6 takes place in the first two measures, due to the addition of the piano right hand. Motives 4 and 5 are transformed through expansion, as the first note of Motive 5 continues the descending scale, opposing the contour of its original relation to Motive 4.



Ex. 50 I:96-97, piano right hand

Measures 98-99 remain the same as their counterpart in the first section (bars 86-87), save for the slight harmonic alterations in the violin part.

The alterations of Motive 2 between the various parts in measures 100-103 are now more widely spaced, extending to the piano left hand, which has hitherto played only the pedal A. To compensate for the added texture, the lower octave A of the bass pedal is omitted for ten measures.

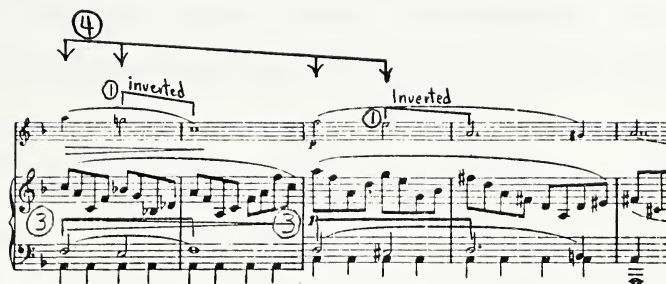
The dominant of G Minor is introduced in measure 104, as Motive 3 emerges in the piano left hand. (Its first appearance was in the violin part, bars 92-95). While its original shape is maintained between measures 104-105 and 106-107, the intervallic space is expanded between measures

105-106 and 107-108 to form intervals of major and minor thirds, and perfect fourths.

Ex. 51 I:100-108

The third section of the Development begins at the crest of a high melodic point (bar 108), from which the basic motives are tranquillized through rhythmic augmentation.

In keeping with the dominating presence of Motive 3 (bars 104-107), and its rhythmic expansion in the piano left hand (bars 108-109), the Motive 3 dynamic swell has also been expanded over a period of five measures (bars 105-109). Motives 1 and 4 have been expanded through intervallic inversion and rhythmic augmentation, respectively, between measures 108 and 111. The rhythmic contour of Motive 3, now shifted to the violin part in measure 111, bears a closer resemblance to its original shape, preparing the way for its appearance as such in measures 112-115.



Ex. 52 I:108-112

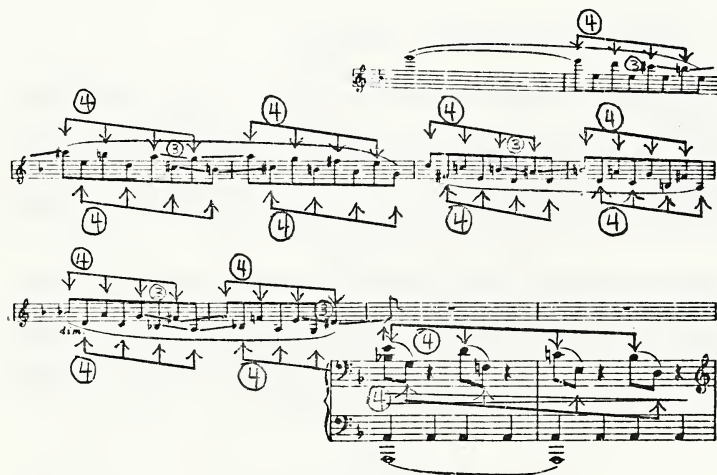
Brooding and mystery are rekindled in the measures which serve as transition (bars 112-115), providing a new and sudden harmonic colouring of F sharp minor, then A major. Melodically, these four measures are a repetition of measures 92-95, save for the transposition measures which raise the melodic tones a half-step.

The character of tranquillity returns in the last four measures of Development III (bars 116-119), but Motives 1 and 3 have disappeared. Motive 4 achieves its fullest expansion in the unbroken chromatic scale of the melody, preserving its original perfect fourth range. Extensions of Motive 7 can be seen in the piano's descending arpeggios of measures 117 and 119.



Ex. 53 I:116-119

The fourth section of the Development (bars 120-129) opens with a sunny assertion of high E in the violin part, marking the beginning of the long descent to the Recapitulation. The major sixth descending intervals of the melodic line present a variation of Bridge II (bars 34-38), and Motive 4 is once again subjected to a double development, this time in the violin part.¹² As the momentum dies down, the bass motive is returned to the piano, augmented to half-note values.



Ex. 54 I:120-129

RECAPITULATION

A continuation of the developmental rippling eighth-note figuration characterizes the return of the First Subject (bars 130-153), thereby maintaining the dark and somber mood

¹²Previous double development of Motive 4 can be seen in examples 38 and 50 (pp. 51, 59).

of the development. Even the germ theme melody has been lowered one octave. No additional motivic development occurs within this appearance of the First Subject.

With the return of Bridge Ia comes a sudden change of character, setting aside completely the contemplative mood in exchange for one of intense energy.

The transformation of Bridge Ia (bars 157-168) increases the energy with its canonic development of Motive 2. Several extensions of Motive 7 can be seen in this Bridge section.

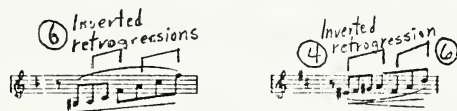
Canonic development of ②

Ex. 55 I:157-168

The remainder of the Bridge section (bars 168-185) shows no further motivic development.

The return of the Second Subject (bars 186-208) remains unchanged from its counterpart until the violin state-

ment is reached. Its introductory measure (bar 199) differs from the first appearance in that the first four notes form a retrogression of Motive 4. The earlier measure was completely dominated by a retrogression of Motive 6.



Ex. 56 I:61; 199, violin

The biggest change in the return of the Second Subject occurs with the key change to F Major at the high point of the violin statement (bar 204). Though this section has been reduced from eight measures to four, phrase extension has been retained to include repetition of the melodic high point.



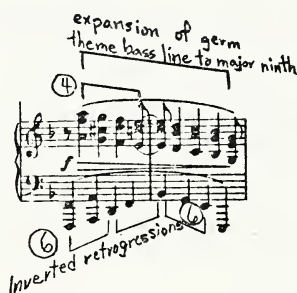
Ex. 57 I:204-209, violin

A new Bridge IV section (bars 208-217) uses the material of the Exposition Codetta to form a series of upward modulations, leading to the final Coda of the movement. Measures 214-217 add the recent motivic material of the Bridge Ia expansion.

CODA

The First Subject appears in its grandest form at the opening of the Coda, bars 218-236. The dynamic marking has been amplified to *forte*,¹³ the texture has been thickened to three-note chords in the piano right hand, the bass line widens its melodic leaps and reinforces them with octaves, and the violin part emphasizes its opening A with an octave.

The original descending bass line, now in the piano right hand, has expanded its Motive 4 and 5 configurations, to cover a descending scale pattern of a major ninth.¹⁴ The new bass line is dominated by outlines of Motive 6, both in its intact and retrograded forms.



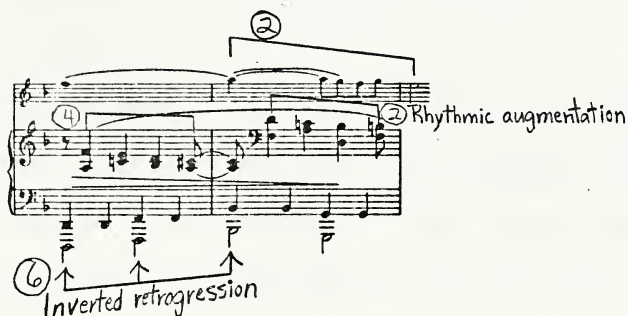
Ex. 58 I:218-219

In the transposition of the germ theme (bars 222-225), Brahms transforms the original descending bass line once again. As in measure 218, Motive 4 remains true to its

¹³The Exposition statement was marked *piano*, and the Recapitulation statement *sotto voce espressivo*.

¹⁴In measures 96-97 of the Development, Motives 4 and 5 were expanded to a space of one octave, without losing their original contour. See p. 59.

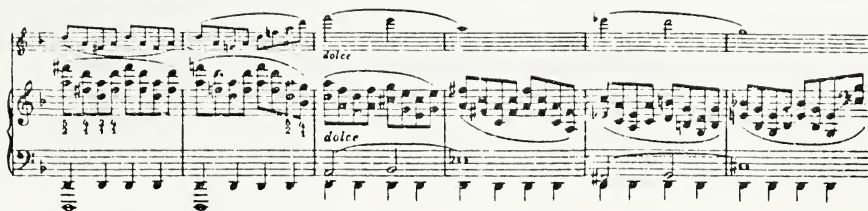
counterpart (bar 5). However, the continuation of the line in measure 223 becomes a rhythmically augmented variation of Motive 2 in the violin part. A retrogression of Motive 6 in the bass line has also been augmented rhythmically.



Ex. 59 I:222-224

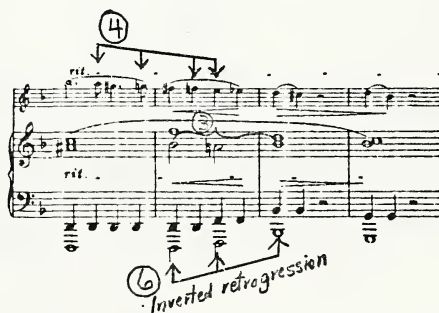
Theme A_2 of the First Subject (bars 226-233) is shortened by the removal of its central phrases, avoiding the original modulation to A minor. The piano part remains unchanged from its first appearance, save for the added texture of the doublings in both treble and bass.

A miniature return of the Development (bars 236-257) is based on its original sections one and three. The most significant change occurs between measures 248 and 253, where the melodic action based on Motive 3 is suspended two measures early, and replaced by an imitating pattern of descending and rising sixths in the piano right hand.



Ex. 60 I:248-253

The developmental melody continues its expansion of Motive 4 in the ritard before the final cadence (bars 254-257).¹⁵ Motive 3 can be seen in the inner part, and a retrogression of Motive 6 dominates the bass line, steering it away from the pedal D.



Ex. 61 I:254-257

The final *sostenuto* cadence (bars 258-264) bids farewell with its modified statement of the germ theme. Motives 1, 2, and 4 are heard in their original form and placing, while Motive 3 is transformed rhythmically in the piano right hand. Motive 5 is transformed as it was in the

¹⁵See discussion of this melody on p.61 (example 53).

opening of the Coda.¹⁶

New harmonic implications add to the beauty of this final cadence. The rise of Motive 1 is no longer given the restful tonic of D Minor. Rather, it is supported dynamically by the dominant of G Minor, the sub-dominant. The high D does not descend to the usual third-step of F Major, but rather to the fifth of a D Major chord. This new freshness is emphasized by the repetition of Motive 2 in three different registers. The final repetition exploits the richness of the violin G string, backed by a piano arpeggio of D Major in triplet motion.

V/3- D+

① sostenuto

② p dim.

③

④

⑤

⑥

Transformation of (4) (5) to span of major ninth

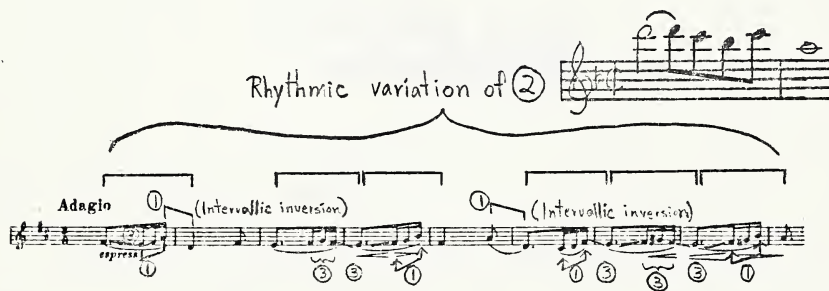
Ex. 62 I:258-264

¹⁶This transformation is discussed on p. 65.

Adagio

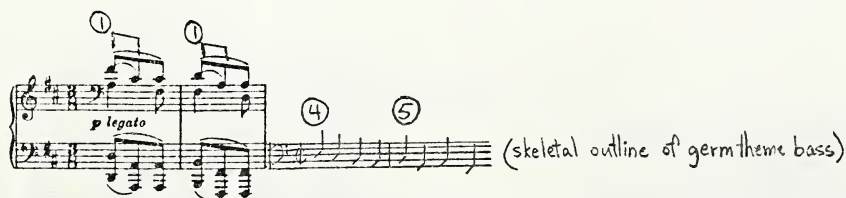
Absolute simplicity of structure and melodic beauty of subject mark the Adagio as one of the high points in the chamber music of Brahms.

The first part of the Subject (bars 1-9) is built on a rhythmical variation of Motive 2, for which an affinity can also be seen in the melodic contours. Motives 1 and 3 play a strong role in these measures, and can be seen in their original, inverted, and expanded forms.



Ex. 63 II:1-9

Inversions of Motive 1 dominate the accompaniment in the theme A_1 , and form a skeletal outline of the germ theme bass.



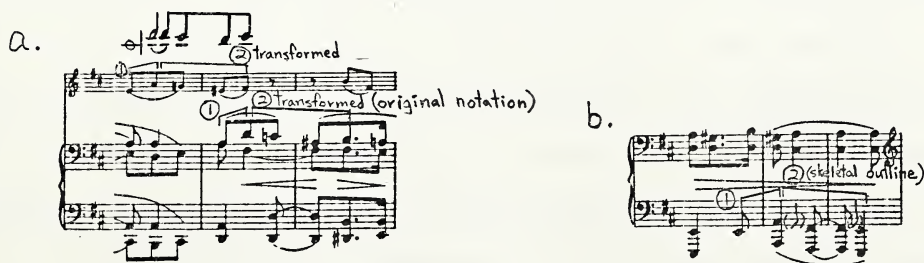
Ex. 64 II:1-2, piano

If the intervals F \sharp -A-D (taken from the melody of measures 5-6 and the essential tones of measures 1-2) are considered to be a basic intervallic motive of the Adagio, a transposed retrogression of this motive can be seen at the beginning of the theme's section A₂. Furthermore, if the sixteenth-note pattern in measures nine and ten is divided into two groups of four notes, according to its essential tones, a transposed and inverted outline of Motive 3 can be detected from its essential tones.



Ex. 65 II:9-11, violin

Measures 11 and 12 of the theme A₂ represent a rhythmic and intervallic transformation of Motives 1 and 2. The imitation in the accompaniment is transformed from the original notation of the germ theme motives. A further skeletal outline of Motives 1 and 2 can be found in the accompaniment bass of measures 16-18.



Ex. 66 II:11-13; 16-18, piano

A descending series of thirds played by the violin serves as the climactic point of the Subject (bars 21-21). These thirds state Motive 4 in its original form, while varying the rhythmical shape of Motive 3. The ascending pattern of sixteenth-notes directly proceeding this high point (bars 19-20) contributes to an expansion of Motives 1 (formed between the essential tones) and 6. Further investigation reveals that these sixteenth-notes, if grouped according to their essential tones, represent melodic inversions to their corresponding four-note groupings in measures 9 and 10.



Ex. 67 II:9-10, violin; 19-24, violin

The melody of the Transition section (bars 25-36) is dominated by inversions and transformations of the perfect fourth motive. With each appearance of the four-measure melodic phrase (stated three times - first by piano, then violin, then by piano bass line as accompaniment), the interval of the fourth becomes expanded as it continues, culminating in measures 33-36 as a series of descending fifths.

A distinctive accompanying line (first played by the violin in measures 25-28) varies rhythmically and transforms

Motive 3. The second appearance of this line (bars 33-36) is elevated to melodic stature, where its original neighboring tones of a half-step are expanded (as is the perfect fourth motive) to intervals of a minor third. Further expansion in measure 36 results in rhythmic augmentation of Motive 3.

③ Transformed

-4th P4th P4th

1 Inversions

Rhythmic contour of ③ now in melody

Rhythmic shape augmented

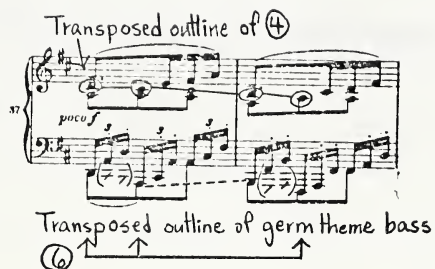
-4th P4th P4th P5th P5th P5th P4th

dolce

pp

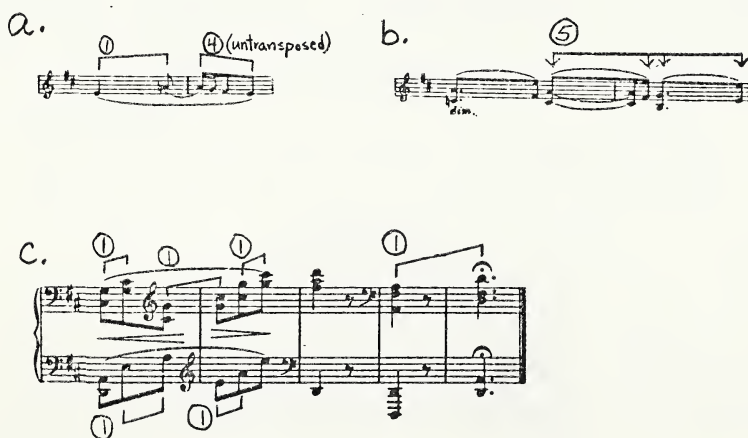
Ex. 68 II:25-37

The return of the Subject is marked by stronger ties with the germ theme outlines. The melody, now played an octave higher by the violin and doubled in the piano right hand, is supported by the richer texture of added triplets in the bass and inner voices in the piano right hand. The transposed outline of the germ theme bass found in the opening statement of the Subject is supported in measures 37-38 by another outline of Motive 4, exposed by the inner voices.



Ex. 69 II:37-38, piano

Further examples of the germ theme influence can be found in measures 47-48, where Motives 1 and 4 appear in their original and slightly altered forms, and in measures 63-64, where a transposed outline of Motive 5 is exposed in the melodic extension of the theme A_4 . Motive 1, which has been inverted, contracted, and expanded throughout the movement, is finally set right side up in the last five measures, untransposed and in its original intervallic size.

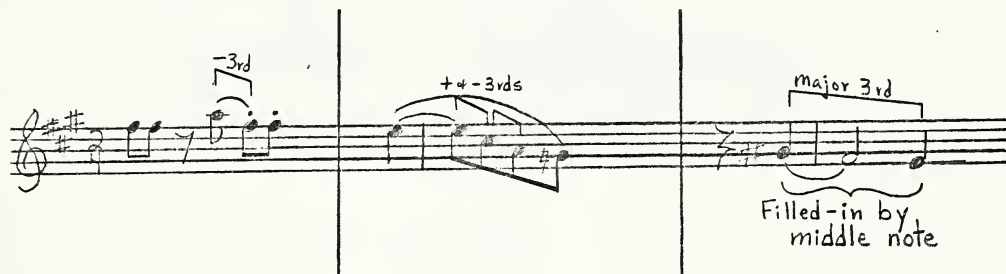


Ex. 70 II:47-48 violin; 63-64 violin; 71-75

Un Poco Presto E Con Sentimento

The thematic material of the third movement is based on the interval of a falling third. Three small motivic ideas use this interval, and are outlined as follows:

a. A₁, measures 1-2 b. A₂, measures 17-18 c. A₂, measures 19-21



Ex. 71 III:1-2; 17-18; 19-21, violin

The first statement of the theme is begun by the piano, while the violin part sketches the harmonic background in thirds (bars 1-4). These thirds, along with their descending lines also in thirds, are strongly related to the first motivic idea.



Ex. 72 III:1-5

The descending series of thirds in the melody of measure 12 (altered slightly by two intervals of a major second) anticipate the second motivic idea with their rhythmic diminution. In the second half of the theme, this pattern is repeated and extended in the piano accompaniment (bars 17-18; 21-22).



Ex. 73 III:12; 17-18, piano

The third motivic idea is also anticipated, by the filled-in thirds of the melody in measures 4 and 8. This intervallic pattern plays an important role in the thematic development of the movement.



Ex. 74 III:1-8

Though the movement is based on the three separate motivic ideas mentioned above, its relation to the germ theme and the seven basic motives is maintained throughout.

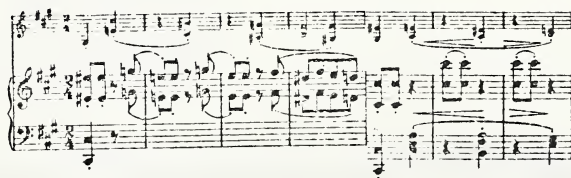
The rhythmic shape of Motive 3 creates the setting for the first part of the theme, while the second part char-

acterizes the rhythmic design of Motive 2. In the Development Section the theme even assumes the original rhythmic shape of Motive 2.



Ex. 75 III:1-2, piano; 73-75, piano; 95-97, violin

Motive 5 becomes a strong force in the third movement because of its alternate sequence of falling thirds. Its outline is first revealed in measures 6-8 of the opening theme. A double chromatic transformation of Motive 4 takes place simultaneously in this second phrase of the theme, appearing both in the melody and in the accompanying violin line, where it is extended to measure 11.



Ex. 76 III:5-11

Bridge I (bars 25-28) provides a transposed variation of Motive 5, together with a reminder of Motive 1 in the chordal root movement of the bass line. It is the material

of this Bridge section which serves as the basis for the syncopated sequential pattern appearing twice in the Development (bars 64-69; 86-91).



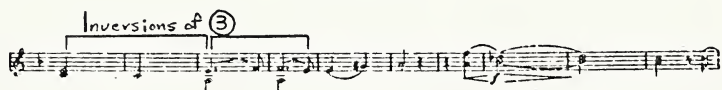
Ex. 77 III:25-28, piano; 64-69

The second statement of the theme (bars 29-53) is played entirely by the violin, with a modified accompaniment in the piano. The bass line of measures 29-31 varies the original chordal outline (bars 1-4), filling in the notes to create an expanded form of Motive 4. The sixteenth-note pattern, representing a variation of the second motivic idea, is now reversed to form a rising series of thirds (bars 45-50).



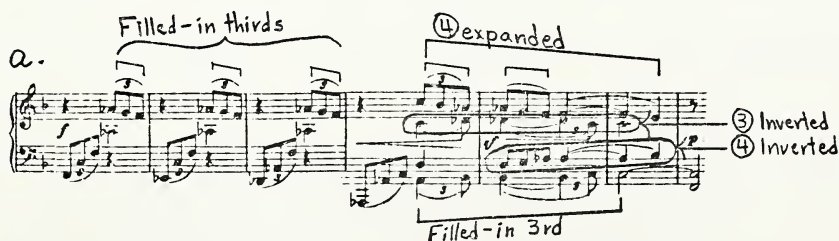
Ex. 78 III:29-31 } piano
45-50 }

The violin accompaniment to the abridged theme (A_1) in the Development section is based on an inverted and transformed (from a major to a minor second interval) image of Motive 3. Its rhythmic shape takes on a new design in measures 72-73.



Ex. 79 III:70-79

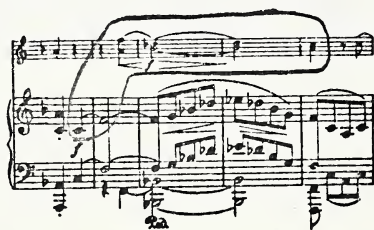
The texture of this accompaniment is thickened when it returns in measures 91-96, now played by the piano. The inversion of Motive 3 is camouflaged in the inner treble part (bars 94-96), while several patterns of the filled-in third characterize the outer parts. Motive 4 is also represented in these measures, with its expansion in the top line, and inversion in the tenor voice. The development of Motive 4 is highly concentrated in measures 103-104, where it appears in contrary motion.





Ex. 80 III:91-97, piano; 99-105

Further relation between the Development section and the germ theme can be seen in the Bridge II (bars 75-86), where a skeletal outline of the germ theme can be detected in the two parts.



Ex. 81 III:75-79

Motive 4 is the dominating force of the transition (bars 111-119), with its descending melodic line appearing in both parts. The inner line of the piano right hand presents two chromatic transformations of the same motive, similar to the transformation taking place in the second phrase of the theme. The first two measures of each part represent the filled-in third interval, while the bass line of measures 115 and 117 vary Motive 5.

meno presto

④ expanded

④ expanded

legato espress.

rit.

④

Expanded chromatic transformation of ④

Chromatic transformation of ④

⑤

⑤

Ex. 82 III:111-119

No further motivic development is presented in the return of the theme (bars 119-143), save for the inverted melodic imitations in the bass line of measures 122 and 126.

in tempo

④ expanded

⑤

⑤

Chromatic transformation of ④

Ex. 83 III:119-126, piano

The imitation of Motive 5 in the melody of Bridge I (bars 25-28) is now relegated to the inner and bass voices of its modified counterpart (bars 143-147). Bridge III continues with a new melody in the violin part, based on two descending patterns of Motive 4.

④

④

⑤

⑤

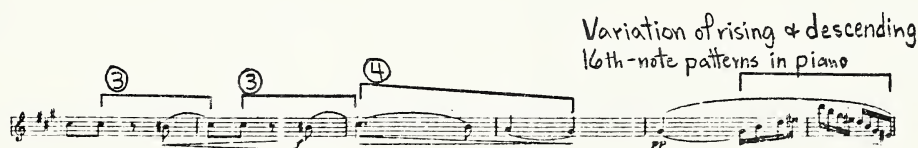
Chromatic transformation of ④



Ex. 84 III:143-154

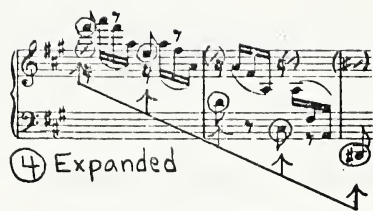
The Coda (bars 155-181) elvishly plays with the material of the first half of the theme, adding colour through the exploitation of double-stop thirds and their inverted sixths, played by the violin. The descending and rising sixteenth-note pattern of the piano is finally imitated in the same notation by the violin (bars 173-174).

Examples of Motives 3 and 4 can be seen in the melody of measures 169-172. This is the first appearance of Motive 3 in its uninverted form, and it comes complete with its characteristic swell.



Ex. 85 III:169-175, violin

Motive 4 makes its final appearance in the piano part of measures 177-179, where the descending scale line (presented earlier in more sedate fashion, bars 29-31) is now whirled over a space of five octaves.



Ex. 86 III:177-179, piano

Presto Agitato

EXPOSITION

As in the opening Allegro, the first four measures of the final movement represent a high degree of motivic concentration, and present all but two of the basic motives to be developed throughout the movement.

The melodic line, stated by the piano, portrays a skeletal outline of the germ theme bass, modified slightly by the raised pitch of the C sharp in measure 2.¹⁷ The melody simultaneously varies Motive 5 in each two-measure segment, while presenting an expanded form of Motive 7.

Both melodic and bass lines imitate the rhythmic shape of Motive 3, and the bass line presents a series of overlapping inversions and retrogressions of Motive 6. The violin accompaniment recalls the role of its accompanying third interval in the Un Poco Presto e Con Sentimento, and establishes the shape of Motive 1.

¹⁷The bass accompaniment to the Adagio theme is an identical imitation of the germ theme outline.

Role of 3rd from Scherzo continued in accompaniment

Presto agitato

Skeletal outline of germ theme bass
(Similar to *Adagio* accompaniment)

Expanded

Contracted

Inverted

Retrograde

Retrograde

Rhythmic shape of ③
Melodic variation of ⑤

Ex. 87 IV:1-4

The second part of the theme establishes the three note melodic contour as a major motivic idea (bars 5-6), modifying its Motive 3 rhythmic shape with a shift of accent to the first beat of the bar in measures 6 and 10.¹⁸ The melody is then expanded (bars 7-8; 11-12) to include an inverted diminution of its earlier quotation of Motive 7 (now back to the size it was originally presented in), together with an example of the filled-in third interval of the third movement.

Inverted

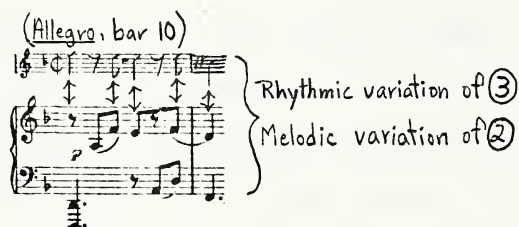
Filled-in 3rd

(Accent shift)

Ex. 88 IV:5-8, violin

¹⁸In the first four measures, accent was implied through harmonic stress on the middle note of the harmonic contour (last beat of each bar).

A strong link can be detected between the first Bridge (bars 17-38) and the A_2 theme of the first movement, where the opening of the Bridge section directly imitates the rhythmical shape of the melody in measures 10 and 15 of the first movement. Closer investigation reveals that a common intervallic relationship also exists between the two figures. Both figures represent rhythmic and melodic variations of Motives 3 and 2, respectively.



Ex. 89 IV:17-18, piano¹⁹

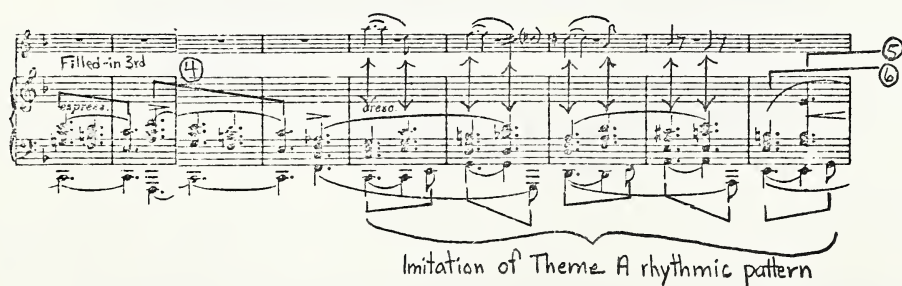
The principal melodic idea of the final movement has a milder characteristic when it is repeated at the end of each phrase in the Bridge I. Its third note sforzando has now been replaced with a piano marking, to which the motive diminishes from a forte beginning. The last phrase tapers off with a descending pattern of Motive 7, along with a characteristic extension of rising and falling filled-in thirds, alternated between the two instruments.

¹⁹Fisher, p. 132.



Ex. 90 IV:31-39

The Second Subject opens with the filled-in third motive, then continues its melody with a descending pattern of Motive 4 (bars 39-42). An inverted image of the opening theme A_1 (bars 1-4) can be seen in the rising melody of measures 43-46, and at the height of the arch (bars 47-49), inversions of Motives 6 and 5 take place. The descending arch line (bars 49-55) renews its presentation of Motive 4, chromatically transformed in measures 51-52. Further reference to the A_1 theme is supplied by the bass line with its rhythmic imitation of the principal motive.

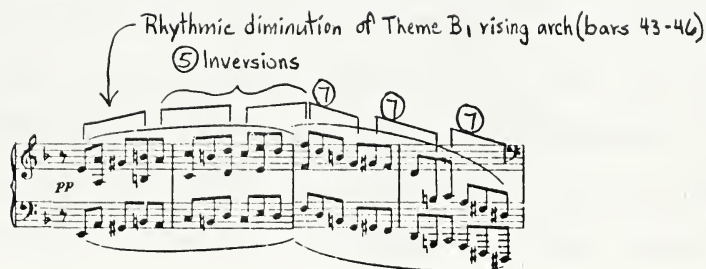


Ex. 91 IV:39-55

The inversions and retrogressions of Motive 6 that dominated the bass of the first four measures are continued in the middle section of the Second Subject (B_2 , bars 55-60). The syncopated pattern which dominated the accompaniment to the opening Allegro's First Subject has also been re-instated in these measures.

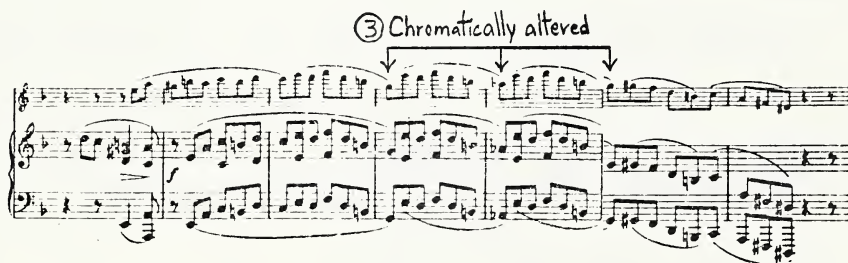
Ex. 92 IV:55-60

A rhythmic diminution of the Second Subject rising arch section (B_1 , bars 43-46) is presented in the first four notes of the Bridge II (bar 73). The Bridge is continued in measures 73-76 to include two inverted images of Motive 5, and three descending groups of Motive 7.



Ex. 93 IV:73-76

The second appearance of Bridge II (bars 107-113) is extended to include a chromatically altered transposition of Motive 3.



Ex. 94 IV:107-113

The Third Subject (bars 76-107) has been classified as such because of its distinctive theme. Yet, it may almost be considered as a miniature Development section because of the strong ties associated with both of the previous Subject and Bridge sections. The triplet characteristic of the Third Subject can be associated with the First Subject A₂ theme (bars 5-13), while its filled-in third intervallic characteristic comes from Bridge I. Further association to Bridge I is shown by the manner in which the two instruments imitate each other in canon, measures 84-96.

The piano right hand of measures 77-80 imitates the opening of the Second Subject (bars 39-42) with its inversion of the melodic line,²⁰ while the melody of measures 104-107 (theme C₃) represents a rhythmic diminution of the rising and falling arch of the Second Subject B₁ theme (bars 47-50).

Other examples of motivic development in the Third Subject include inversions of Motive 3 (violin part, bars 77-79), Motive 4 (violin, 80-83; piano bass, 77-80), and Motive 7 (violin, 88-91). Further imitations of Motive 5 can be seen in the piano part of measures 89-91, and a chromatic transformation of the inverted Motive 4 covers the span of a complete octave in the piano bass of measures 96-102.

The image displays three systems of handwritten musical notation. The top system is a single staff with a treble clef, containing a melodic line with several eighth and sixteenth notes. Above this staff, there are three annotations: a circled '3' followed by 'Inverted' with a downward arrow, 'Filled-in Brds' with two downward arrows, and a circled '4' followed by 'Inverted' with a downward arrow. The middle system consists of two staves, treble and bass, with a grand staff bracket. The treble staff has a treble clef and contains a series of eighth notes. Above it, there is a circled '4' followed by 'Inverted' with a downward arrow. The bass staff has a bass clef and contains a series of eighth notes. Above it, there is a circled '4' followed by 'Inverted' with a downward arrow. The bottom system also consists of two staves, treble and bass, with a grand staff bracket. The treble staff has a treble clef and contains a series of eighth notes. Above it, there is a circled '4' followed by 'Inverted' with a downward arrow. The bass staff has a bass clef and contains a series of eighth notes. Above it, there is a circled '4' followed by 'Inverted' with a downward arrow.

²⁰Ibid., p. 138.

The image displays three systems of handwritten musical notation for piano, with various annotations and transformations indicated by arrows and text.

- System 1 (Top):** Features a treble and bass staff. Annotations include "⑦ Inverted and abridged" and "⑦ Inverted" with arrows pointing to specific melodic lines. The word "cresc." is written below the bass staff.
- System 2 (Middle):** Also in treble and bass staves. An annotation "⑤ Inverted (Rhythmic augmentation of Bridge II)" is placed above the treble staff. The word "cresc." appears below the bass staff.
- System 3 (Bottom):** Treble and bass staves. An annotation "④ Inverted chromatic transformation (octave span)" is placed below the bass staff. Above the treble staff, the text "Rhythmic diminution of B₁ (high point of arch)" is written with a bracket.

Arrows indicate the flow of the music from one system to the next, and some measures are circled or bracketed to highlight specific transformations.

Ex. 95 IV:76-107

DEVELOPMENT - RECAPITULATION

Because the Third Subject presented a highly concentrated development of all previous material, the remaining developmental material is limited to the First Subject. This development (bars 131-194) also marks the beginning of the

Recapitulation, taking the place of a normal restatement of the First Subject in the tonic key.²¹

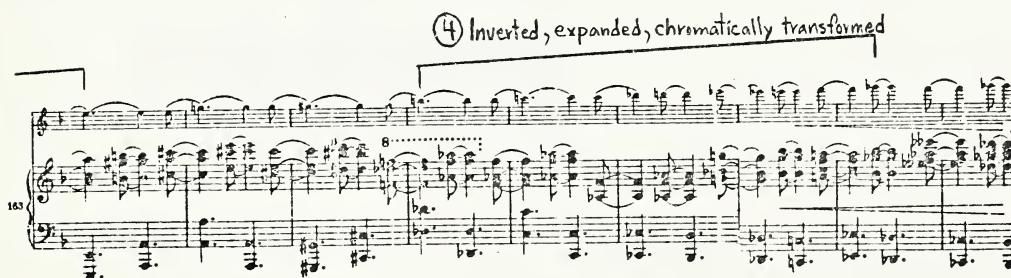
A fugal development of the skeletal A_2 theme is presented in measures 130-157. The theme is first played by the violin (bars 134-141) over a simple harmonic background, sketched by syncopated chords in the piano. The melody is then transferred to the piano right hand (bars 142-149), while the violin continues in a contrapuntal pattern of syncopation, displaying original transposed forms of Motives 4 and 1. In measures 150-157, the theme is played by the piano bass, while the earlier syncopated pattern of the violin is transferred to the piano right hand. This is pitted against further contrapuntal syncopation in the violin.

²¹The First Subject is restated in the tonic key at the end of both Exposition and Recapitulation sections (bars 114-129; 293-310). For clarification see Presto Agitato under Structure, pp. 41, 42.



Ex. 96 IV:130-157

The syncopation passage gathers momentum in the transitional measures leading to the second developmental statement of the First Subject (bars 158-171), displaying inverted chromatic transformations of Motive 4.



Ex. 97 IV:158-171

The First Subject developmental section in measures 171-194 uses the material of the triplet accompanying figure in the A_1 theme. Motive 7 appears here in its original and inverted forms, as well as an isolated transformation of Motive 2.

Handwritten musical score for piano, showing measures 176 to 194. The score is in G major and 4/4 time. It includes various musical notations such as treble and bass staves, notes, rests, and dynamic markings. Handwritten annotations include "transformed" above measure 178, "non legato" above measure 179, "Inverted, abridged" above measure 181, and a circled "7" above measure 182. Measure numbers 176, 181, and 191 are printed on the left margin.

Ex. 98 IV:171-194

The remainder of the Recapitulation is unmodified from the Exposition, except for the bass pedal of Bridge I (bars 194-209), which reminisces the developmental pedal-tone of the opening Allegro.

Pedal-tone bass
16 measures

Ex. 99 IV:194-209

CODA

A remarkable summary of the movement is contained in the Coda.

Measures 311-312 imitate part of the triplet melodic curve of the theme A_2 , while the counterpart measures 315-318 continue the melodic curve, transferring it from the piano part to the violin. The eighth-note rests in measures 317-318 imitate the developmental statement of this First Subject theme (bars 171-194).



Ex. 100 IV:311-312; 315-319

Measures 313-314 imitate Bridge I, while their corresponding measures 319-325 develop the first Bridge, creating variations of Motives 5 and 7.



Ex. 101 IV:313-315; 319-325

The skeletal outline of the germ theme bass returns with the last appearance of the theme A_1 (bars 325-330), finally outlined in its original transposed form. From here the movement whirls to an end with a flourish of Bridge I and theme A_2 imitations.

Skeletal outline of germ theme bass (original notation)

327

332

C.F.

Ex. 102 IV:327-337

Part Four - Rhythm

Gradual breakdown of symmetrical melody with a rise of increased rhythmical complexity characterized the music of the late Romantic composers. Rhythmic complexity in the music of Brahms is extensive enough to be labelled a stylistic trait. Less symmetry is to be found in his motive design, and greater elasticity within the phrase.

Rather than indicating special rhythmic effects by the notation of new meter, altered note values, or a different tempo, Brahms often represents rhythmic irregularity with more subtle markings, such as slurs, changed beaming, or dynamic marks. Elements such as harmonic change, directional change, and size of intervals help to determine the length and placement of rhythmic units. Frequently these units do not fit into the prevailing metrical structure, resulting in a definite conflict between rhythm and meter. It is precisely this conflict that injects vitality and elasticity into his rhythmic structures.

The D Minor Sonata contains many examples of rhythmic complexity, particularly in the Presto Agitato. They are examined under the following headings of Syncopation, Two Against Three, Hemiola, and Change of Meter.

Syncopation

Syncopation occurs when the weaker beats in a measure are accented, without eliminating entirely the stress of the strong beats.

Three prominent examples are to be found in the first movement, each contributing to motive function.

Syncopation dominates the major part of the First Subject. It is generated from the piano right hand which imitates the bass line on the after-beats. This occurs in measures 1-11, and, after a two-measure phrase where duplets against triplets accompany the melody, the syncopation is continued from measures 13-16. At the return of the First Subject in the Recapitulation (bars 130-153), the quarter-note syncopated pattern in the piano is replaced with an equal moving eighth-note figure. However, the syncopated pattern returns in the final statement of the opening theme (Coda, bars 218-236), where it is now supported in the right hand with two and three-note chords, making the weak beats not only equal, but of dominating strength.

a. **Allegro**

Violine *p sotto voce ma espressivo*

Pianoforte *p sotto voce*

b.

sotto voce espress.

130 *p sotto voce molto legato sempre*

The image contains two musical score excerpts, labeled 'a.' and 'b.'. Excerpt 'a.' is titled 'Allegro' and shows a Violine (Violin) part and a Pianoforte (Piano) part. The Violine part has the instruction 'p sotto voce ma espressivo' and the Pianoforte part has 'p sotto voce'. Both parts show syncopated rhythms. Excerpt 'b.' shows a continuation of the piano part with the instruction 'sotto voce espress.' and 'p sotto voce molto legato sempre'. The piano part features a syncopated eighth-note figure. The measure number '130' is indicated at the start of the second system in excerpt 'b.'.



Ex. 103 I:1-4; 130-132; 218-221

A second example of syncopation in the first movement occurs in Bridge Ib (bars 30-33; 169-171), where the third beat of each measure the violin is anticipated by an eighth-note tied over.



Ex. 104 I:30-33

In the fourth bridge of the opening Allegro (bars 157-168), syncopation is stressed on the weak beats in both parts. Each stress occurs on the second beat of the measure and is amplified by the use of heavier chords and accent markings.



Ex. 105 I:157-160

Two important examples of syncopation are to be found in the Poco Presto e Con Sentimento.

In the first part of the Principal Subject, the violin does not play on the strong beats, while in the second part, accents employed on the weak beats imply syncopation.

a. Un poco presto e con sentimento



b.



Ex. 106 III:1-8; 17-22

The piano and violin erupt in violent conflict in the syncopated passages found between the two principal sections. In the second appearance, the role of the instruments is altered, so that the violin plays off the beat.



Ex. 107 III:65-69

The last movement is the most complex rhythmically, and the following examples will illustrate the use of syncopation.

Theme B_2 of the Second Subject (bars 55-72) is extremely complex, involving several types of conflict simultaneously.²² The syncopation is found in the piano part, where the right hand delays the bass pattern by one beat.²³



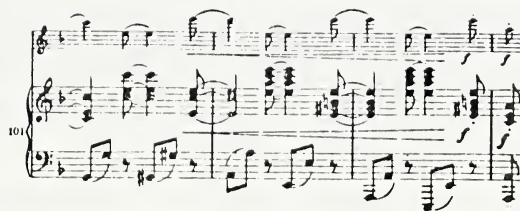
Ex. 108 IV:55-64

In the second half of the Third Subject, the violin part and the piano right hand delay the bass line.



²²To be discussed in detail under heading of Change of Meter, p. 114 (example 126).

²³This may also be classified as displaced hemiola. For definition, see section under Hemiola, p. 109.



Ex. 109 IV:96-104

Syncopation forms the basis for the development of the First Subject in measures 130-176. It is first implied with a four-measure introduction from the piano (fourth and fifth beats only), then counteracted against a skeletal outline of the A_2 theme played by the violin. After measure 141, the syncopation gathers momentum (now in the violin while the piano plays the theme). By measure 149, the piano joins in the syncopation (the theme is still heard in the bass line for eight measures), and together the two instruments soar toward the climactic statement of the First Subject, heralding the beginning of a second development of the same theme.



148

154

155

164

165

182

cresc. sempre più a poco

cresc. sempre più a poco

p

Ex. 110 IV:130-176

The syncopation of the violin part forms the leading motivic device in the second developmental statement of the theme A_2 (bars 171-194). In measures 185-186, the syncopation gains momentum so that it actually turns into a conflict of shifted meter.

171

184


185

194

p



Ex. 111 IV:177-194, violin

Syncopation is implied in the return of the first Bridge (bars 194-217) by the sudden disappearance of a strong first beat in the violin part of measures 203 and 205. These are the only two instances in which the presiding rhythmic motive  is left without its third note on a strong beat.



Ex. 112 IV:199-206, violin

In the Coda, syncopation is implied by accent markings over weak beats in both piano and violin parts. The weak second beats of measures 319-324 are further strengthened by three-note chords in the piano right hand, preceeded by eighth-note rests on the first beats.²⁴

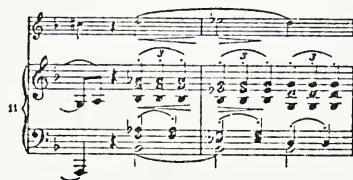


Ex. 113 IV:319-325

²⁴ Measures 323-325 could be classified as displaced hemiola.

Two Against Three

Duple against triple conflicts arise in each movement. In the opening theme of the first movement, triplet chords in the piano right hand against a duple pattern in the bass fill the texture while the violin reposes.



Ex. 114 I:11-12

At the return of the First Subject, this device is used only in the first measure of each phrase segment. The duple pattern is now transformed into a moving eighth-note figure, and appears in the piano right hand instead of the bass. The triplet figure, now in the bass, has been reduced to a two note, then one note pattern.



Ex. 115 I:140-141; 145-150

The cantilena of the slow movement is given a richer texture in its return, not only by the doubling of the violin melody in the piano right hand, but from the use of compound triple meter in the bass which opposes the simple triple meter of the melody.



Ex. 116 II:37-39

In the third movement, the rhythm becomes a little more bold with each statement of the principal Subject. Duple against triple conflict does not appear in the first statement, and upon its return after a short bridge, it makes an isolated appearance in measures 32 and 36. After the powerful sequential pattern of syncopation (bars 86-91) makes its appearance, the Subject returns with its strongest assertion of duple-triple conflict.



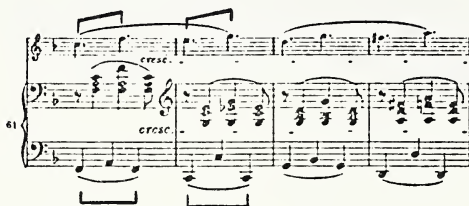
Ex. 117 III:91-97

Toward the end of Bridge I in the last movement, duple-triple conflict emerges between the piano right hand and the bass. The same configuration occurs in the Bridge I of the Development-Recapitulation.



Ex. 118 IV:31-32

In the Second Subject (Theme B₁) of the Presto Agitato, Brahms employs two types of conflict simultaneously - the piano in triple meter (syncopated between the right hand and bass), against the duple melody of the violin.²⁵



Ex. 119 IV:61-64

The only type of disturbance within the measure that does not represent a duple against triple conflict is to be found in the second Bridge of the last movement. Since both parts in the piano move together (the violin does not play), an ambiguous conflict results in the fact that each measure

²⁵This could also be classified as a type of hemiola. For further discussion, see p. 109.

could be grouped as two groups of three beats, or three groups of two beats. If the measures are grouped into three groups of two beats, the four-measure passage could be classified under Hemiola or even Change of Meter.²⁶ In any case, the greater rhythmic activity, together with the possible grouping of three groups of two beats in each measure, causes an acceleration in the musical pace. It is interesting to note that with the second and fourth appearance of Bridge II in extended form, the meter is shifted in the violin part so that the passage begins three beats later. This placing clears the ambiguity of the first and third appearances of Bridge II, with its strong implication of two groups of three beats in each measure.

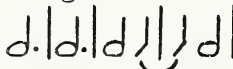


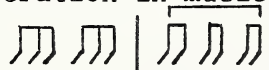
Ex. 120 IV:73-76

1-2-3 | $\frac{2}{4}$ ²⁶ Measures 73-76 would be notated $\frac{2}{4}$ 1-2 | $\frac{3}{4}$ 1-2-3 |
 1-2-3 | $\frac{2}{4}$ 1-2 under change of meter.

Hemiola

Hemiola is a rhythmic device appearing extensively throughout the music of Brahms. Translated from its Greek derivation, hemiola stands for "one and one half".²⁷ It occurs when the normal meter is expanded or contracted so that the grouping becomes larger or smaller.

There are four basic types of hemiola. The first type is extended over the length of two measures, and can occur only in triple meter (3/4 ). Many examples of this type are to be found in the D Minor Sonata.

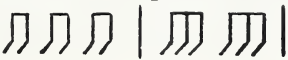
The other three types of hemiola are involved with one-measure lengths. The second type occurs in compound time causing acceleration in musical pace due to the triple meter grouping (6/8 ). Akin to this is a third type involving the same grouping displaced over the bar-line. The first movement of the G Major Sonata, Op. 78 contains many examples of these second and third types, and in



Ex. 121 G Major Sonata I:25-26

²⁷Willi Apel, Harvard Dictionary of Music, 2d. ed., rev. and enl. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), p. 361.

measures 125-126, both types are used simultaneously.²⁸

In the fourth type, triple becomes duple, implying retard in the musical pace due to the fewer number of beats in a measure ($3/4$ )²⁹

The Adagio is the only movement of the D Minor Sonata to employ hemiola extensively. Each example is of two-measure length, and two opposite functions can be distinguished - that of acceleration and retard.

The acceleration hemiola is used in the transitional passage between the two Subjects, and is characterized by shorter note values and a faster rate of chord change. It appears in the piano part of measures 19-20, 27-38, 33-34 (bass line), 51-52, and the violin part of 31-32.



Ex. 122 II: 31-33, violin

Retard characterizes the hemiola of measures 33-34 and 35-36 (piano right hand), with its slower rate of chord change, longer note values, thinner texture, and descending pitch.

²⁸The second and third types of hemiola do not appear in the D Minor Sonata.

²⁹This type does not appear in any of the three Sonatas for piano and violin. For examples, see Exposition and Development sections of the Second Symphony first movement.



Ex. 123 II:33-36

Other examples of hemiola can be found in measures 12-13; 17-18; 46-47; 49-50; 59-60; 61-62; and 63-64.

Change of Meter

Uniform length groupings that suggest a metrical scheme different from the notated time-signature imply a change of meter conflict.

In the first movement, the violin statement of the Second Subject is very complex rhythmically (bars 62-74; 200-208). Here, the piano implies a different meter with its three-note patterns, which do not always coincide with the violin. At the same time, the violin alternates its rhythm between duple and triple, creating a meter of 1-2 | 1-2-3 | 1-2-3 | 1-2 | 1-2-3 | 1-2-3 (bars 62-65). The conflict in both parts is further stressed by the motivic use of the *sforzando* on the eighth-note following each dotted quarter-note. Further unmetrical units occur as the passage progresses, implying a meter of 1-2 | 1-2-3 | 1-2 | 1-2 | 1 | 1-2 | 1-2 | 1-2 | 1-2 | 1-2-3 | 1-2-3 (bars 66-71).

The image displays a musical score for two staves, violin and piano, spanning bars 62 to 71. The violin part (top staff) is marked with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. It features a complex rhythmic pattern with eighth and sixteenth notes, often grouped in threes. The piano part (bottom staff) is marked with a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. It features a more regular rhythmic pattern with eighth and sixteenth notes, often grouped in threes. The score includes various musical notations such as beams, slurs, and dynamic markings like 'espress.' and 'sf'.



Ex. 124 I:62-74

As is so often the case in the music of Brahms, musical ideas are treated with greater complexity when they are repeated. The example of the Second Subject in the first movement can be matched with another example of meter change in the Adagio.

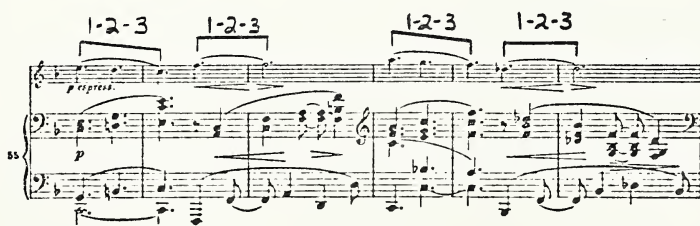
Both times the theme is stated, the high point is directly preceded by a passage of two measure length hemiola, in which the note groupings of both parts move together. However, in the second statement of the theme, yet another unexpected high point ensues, forming the climactic point of the movement. The two-measure passage preceding this high point displays a most beautiful array of rhythmical tension, where a separate division of meter between the two instruments characterizes the acceleration to the climax.





Ex. 125 II:19-20; 51-52; 57-60

Another change of meter conflict is to be found in the Presto Agitato, again, in the Second Subject. Measures 55-57 divide evenly into a "two-measure" phrase length, with three beats in each "measure". The second unit of this phrase length presents further stress. Here, the piano soars upward in a combination of hemiola and syncopation pattern,³⁰ while the violin reposes. The whole effect is that of phrase extension, caused by prolongation of harmonic orientation and note-value. This "two-measure" phrase length is repeated in measures 58-60.



Ex. 126 IV:55-60

³⁰The bass line may be classified as displaced hemiola.

CONCLUSION

The study of the D Minor Sonata has shown a work of large proportion to have been created through intense manipulation of an extremely small amount of musical material, resulting in the fact that intervallic relationships provide the means for both unity and expansion, not only within each movement, but from movement to movement.

With motivic development comes independence of parts, and partly through this Brahms solved the problem of balance between violin and piano perhaps more than in any work previously written for this medium.

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APPENDIX ONE

Tabulated List of Chamber Works,
Arranged In Chronological Order

PERIOD	CHAMBER MUSIC	OPUS	COMPOSITION DATE	PUBLICATION DATE	SOME OTHER WORKS	OPUS	PUBLICATION DATE
I	Scherzo, for violin & piano		Oct. 1853	Posthumous (1906)	Piano Sonatas	1,2,5	1853,54
1853-1854	Piano Trio in B Major	8		1854	Songs	3,6,7	1853,54
	Five Year Gap						
II	String Sextet in B ^b Major	18	1859,60	1862	Four Ballads for Piano	10	1856
1859-1865	Piano Quartet in G Minor	25	1861	1863	Serenade in D Major for Orchestra	11	1860
"Stumm und	Piano Quartet in A Major	26	1861	1863	Piano Concerto No. 1 in D Minor	15	1861
Drung"	Piano Quintet in F Minor	34	1864	1865	Serenade for small orchestra in A Major	16	1875
	Cello Sonata in E Minor	38	1862*	1866			
	String Sextet in G Major	36	1864,65	1866			
	Horn Trio in E ^b Major	40	1865	1868			
	Eight Year Gap						
III	String Quartets in C Minor & A Minor	51	1873	1873	German Requiem	45	1868
1873-1882	Piano Quartet in C Minor	60	Begun 1855, Com. 1873-74	1875	Rinaldo	50	1869
	String Quartet in B ^b Major	67	1875	1876	Triumphs	55	1872
	Violin Sonata in G Major	78	1878,79 Summers	1880	Variations on a theme of Haydn...	56	1874
	Piano Trio in C Major	87	1880,82	1883	Symphony No. 1 in C Minor	68	1877
	String Quintet in F Major	88	1882	1883	Symphony No. 2 in D Major	73	1878
					Violin Concerto in D Major	77	1879
					Academic Festival Overture	80	1881
					Piano Concerto No. 2 in B ^b Major	83	1882
	Four Year Gap						
IV	Cello Sonata in F Major	99	1886	1887	Symphony No. 3 in F Major	90	1884
1886-1894	Violin Sonata in A Major	100	1886 Summer	1887	Symphony No. 4 in E Minor	98	1885
	Piano Trio in C Minor	101	1886	1887	Double Concerto for Violin & Cello	102	1888
	Violin Sonata in D Minor	108	1886,88	1889	Zigeunerlieder	103	1888
	String Quintet in G Major	111	1891	1891	Five Songs	105	1889
	Clarinet Trio in A Minor	114	1891	1892			
	Clarinet Quintet in B Minor	115	1891	1892	Three Intermezzi for piano	117	1892
	Two Clarinet Sonatas in F Minor and F Major	120	1894	1895	Four Serious Songs	121	1896
					Eleven Choral Preludes for Organ		Posthumous

*Last movement 1865

APPENDIX TWO

Poem On The "Thun Sonata", by J. V. Widmann

There where the Aare's waters gently glide
From out the lake and flow towards the town,
Where pleasant shelter spreading trees provide,
Amidst the waving grass I laid me down;
And sleeping softly on that summer day,
I saw a wondrous vision as I lay.

Three knights rode up on proudly steeping steeds,
Tiny as elves, but with the mien of kings,
And spake to me: "We come to search the meads,
To seek a treasure here, of precious things
Amongst the fairest; wilt thou help us trace
A new-born child, a child of heav'nly race?"

"And who are ye?" I, dreaming, made reply;
"Knights of the golden meadows," then they said,
"That at the foot of yonder Niesen lie;
And in our ancient castles many a maid
Hath listened to the greeting of our strings,
Long mute and passed amid forgotten things.

"But lately tones were heard upon the lake,
A sound of strings whose like we never knew,
So David played, perhaps, for Saul's dread sake,
Soothing the monarch curtained from his view;
It reached us as it softly swelled and sank,
And drew us, filled with longing, to this bank.

"Then help us search, for surely from this place,
This meadow by the river, came the sound;
Help us then here the miracle to trace,
That we may offer homage when 'tis found.
Sleeps under flow'rs the new-born creature rare?
Or is it floating in the evening air?"

But ere they ceased, a sudden rapid whirl
Ruffled the waters, and, before our eyes,
A fairy boat from out the wavelet's whirl
Floated up stream, guided by dragon-flies;
Within it sat a sweet-limbed, fair-haired may,
Singing as to herself in ecstasy.

"To ride on waters clear and cool is sweet,
 For clear as deep my being's living source;
 To open worlds where joy and sorrow meet,
 Each flowing pure and full in mingling course;
 Go on, my boat, upstream with happy cheer,
 Heaven is reposing on the tranquil mere."

So sang the fairy child and they that heard
 Owned, by their swelling hearts, the music's might,
 The knights had only tears, nor spake a word,
 Welling from pain that thrilled them with delight;
 But when the skiff had vanished from their eyes,
 The eldest, pointing, said in tender wise:

"Thou beauteous wonder of the boat, farewell,
 Sweet melody, revealed to us to-day;
 We that with slumb'ring minnesingers dwell,
 Bid thee Godspeed, thou guileless stranger fay;
 Our land is newly consecrate in thee
 That rang of old with fame of minstrelsy.

"Now we may sleep again amongst our dead,
 The harper's whole spirit is awake,
 And as the evening glory, purple-red,
 Shineth upon our Alps and o'er our lake,
 And yet on distant mountain sheds its light,
 Throughout the earth this song will wing its flight.

"Yet, though subduing many a list'ning throng,
 In stately town, in princely hall it sound,
 To this our land it ever will belong,
 For here on flowing river it was found."
 Fervent and glad the minnesinger spake;
 "Yes!" cried my heart - and then I was awake.

-Joseph Victor Widmann¹

¹May, pp. 593,94.

APPENDIX THREE

Brahms' Correspondence With Elizabet von Herzogenberg And Clara Schumann, Arranged In Chronological Order

Brahms to Elizabet von Herzogenberg

Vienna, October 21, 1888

*I am tempted to send you another trifle "in undress". But are you sure you don't mind packing it up and returning it? And really, this time, it is not worth the trouble."*¹

Elizabet von Herzogenberg to Brahms

Nice, October 30, 1888

My Dear Friend, - This 30th of October will long be green in my memory. I cannot tell you how I felt when the dear, fat roll of music² was brought in this morning. We were still at breakfast, and my heart beat fast as I cautiously extracted the Kernel from its shell. Heinrich wanted to tear the manuscript from me; but I held it tight, and ran straight up to Amanda's room where - more or less mal coiffees, but full of joyous expectancy - we sat down to play it at once.

We got into the spirit of it immediately, feeling your spell upon us. Our eyes flew from bar to bar, our zeal and delight grew from page to page, our fingers tackled every difficulty with such success that I hardly knew myself. We grasped each successive beauty, feeling quite at home in spite of the startling sense of novelty which a first movement invariably produces.

At the opening of the development we quite caught our breath. How new it is, with that exquisite pedal-note absorbing everything! How our surprise and delight grew and grew as the A showed no sign of giving way, but held its own through all the glorious tissue woven about it! How my left thumb revelled in the pressure it had to exert! And that F sharp minor on that Proteus A, and the gradual ebbing until the theme's subdued return - molto legato. O my friend, that was indeed one of your moments! Not that you ought to take all

¹Herzogenberg Correspondence, p. 351.

²The manuscript of the D Minor Sonata.

the credit, for it was borne in to you on that tide "das flutend stromt gesteigerte Gestalten".³ How happy, how happy this piece makes me! I feel so glad, too, that I kept back nothing of what I felt the other day, for it gives me the more freedom to express all my present delight.

It is still too new to write quite fully, but I must dwell on one or two points; the delicious tranquillo of the coda, and the shorter pedal-note at the end, emphasizing the structure of the sonata-form and welding the two pedal-notes, A and D, into one golden ring. And how one's heart goes out to the last page; to those sustained notes on the violin which combine with the left-hand minims on the piano in such beautiful contrary movement! How it vibrates with emotion, how it grows in intensity at the ritenuto, reaching its climax where the pedal-note ends and the violin becomes chromatic! When we had reached that point we exchanged comprehensive looks, we three, and our looks would have told you much that you would like to hear. Would that I had you here and could press your hand in gratitude for this great gift, and seat you at the piano to hear you play it through to a fine rumbling accompaniment of your own making! What delights me so in this sonata is its wonderful unity. The four movements are so unmistakably members of one family. One purpose dominates them, one colour scheme embraces them all; yet their vitality finds expression in such various ways.

I rejoiced to find the Adagio undisturbed by any middle part, for, as I have often admitted, however nice the middle parts are, I never can enthuse over them. That kind of contrast almost always strikes me as artificial, and my chief pleasure in an Adagio is its continuity of emotion. For that reason this compact movement, so expressive in its contracted form, pleases me particularly. What a fine contrast those clashing chords form to the broad flowing line of the melody, and how beautiful it sounds! How comical (in the best sense, for one laughs for very pleasure) is the Presto! How amazingly original in its breathless hurry, how merry, how humorous and how rich in every line! The piano part is so charmingly written, a pleasure from first to last, and so playable, with all its color-effects, that one can almost manipulate it at the first reading. We literally laughed for pleasure over this movement, and yet how perfectly in keeping with the rest it is! It does no violence to one's mood, but is the natural relaxation of a mind which has just been strained to the utmost seriousness. The presto of the Finale is the most difficult to grasp at first, but one feels at once how good it is going to be and how fitting a crown to the whole; and it has in the highest degree the one quality essential to a Finale - an irresistible impetus. It tears along like Aurora's steeds in the glorious picture,⁴ and gives one no rest until the soothing second subject

³"Goethe" (Max Kalbeck footnote).

⁴"Guido Reni's fresco in the Rospigliosi Palace in Rome. Brahms had a copy of Rafael Morghen's engraving in his music-room in Vienna" (Max Kalbeck footnote).

comes in with such fine solemnity. Short as my acquaintance has been, I took in that beautiful passing-note D, where the violin comes in the third bar, from the first, also the lovely pp passages and the crescendo in the development. How delightful they are to play, too, excepting the last bit, which is rather cruel! We played on and on in a tumult of delight, and paused at last with flushed cheeks, restraining ourselves with an effort from beginning all over again. We could not have done it on Amanda's account; that is reserved for this evening, and we are rejoicing in the prospect meanwhile. I had to write you these few words, which are at least better than a telegram, to let you know what a festival we are having today.

Let me thank you, dearest Friend - thank you for your good deed in sending us the sonata, and thank you for writing it and giving us only of your best. Even Lady Macbeth's ambition is satisfied!

You are not angry with me for the other day, are you? And you do understand that it is just my very sincere admiration for you which makes it impossible for me to do otherwise? All the more do I delight in my feelings today. - Your grateful and devoted

Lisl Herzogenberg.

You will forgive the slovenliness of these prestissimo scribbled lines? I could not wait to think over what I should say, and the result is a mass of slips and smudges.⁵

Brahms to Clara Schumann

Vienna, November 2, 1888

The violin sonata which I mentioned the other day I have sent to the Herzogenbergs, and I have received such an unexpectedly kind letter about it, that I am wondering whether it might not please you too... Forgive me for not having sent you the sonata first, but you will never believe my chief reason for not having done so. The truth is that I can never do a piece the credit of believing that it will please anybody. I feel the same about this one... If the sonata does not please you when you play it through, do not try it with Joachim, but send it back to me.⁶

⁵Herzogenberg Correspondence, pp. 360-63.

⁶Drinker, p. 122.

Brahms to Elizabet von Herzogenberg

Vienna, November 3, 1888

Dear Lady, - A thousand thanks; but greatly as the sonata letter delighted me, I am far more inclined to be suspicious about it than the other...I prefer to consider it an error of judgement rather than a case of hypocrisy, however, so for the present accept my sincere though hasty thanks. - Your grateful

Joh. Br.⁷

Elizabet von Herzogenberg to Brahms

Nice, November 6, 1888

My dear Friend, - I am quite touched by the arrival just now of the dear old G major sonata. It is surely a sign that you are not angry with me, after all. My very best thanks.

I know the D minor sonata by heart now, to my great joy. It is an indescribable pleasure to absorb it into one's self and then play it quite out of one's head. Amanda Rontgen and I kept on smiling at each other when we found even the last movement today. But the development gives us considerable trouble, and I do beg you will look at those syncopations again, and see if you could not alter them a little; I mean from B flat minor onwards, and particularly the bars where the bass has the theme in C sharp minor. It is more comprehensible in the big crescendo afterwards, where the swing and breadth of movement are a help. But the C sharp minor part is complicated by the unfavourable position of some of the important notes of the harmony given to the fiddle. It is really quite a blot on the movement, which is so glorious and so effective as a whole. Then, again, one has to struggle and pant to keep in, because there is so often nothing to mark the strong beats in those bars. It would be just the same, I believe, no matter how good the violinist, and it is such a pity to let that one place spoil the effect, when the rest of the movement sounds so well. It is one of those episodes that only musicians will understand, and that is not desirable, is it?

I have one other proposal: that you should make the chords in the Scherzo pizzicato. It sounds as well again. Played arco, that part becomes abstract too; you hear notes, but no connected sound, and it makes it difficult to trace the continuation when the whole passage is so complicated in itself. I always add the top note on to my own chord, which makes it much clearer. Here at Number 27, Carabacel, it does not seem to matter if I take such liberties!

⁷Herzogenberg Correspondence, p. 364.



If it is left to the violin it is all too shadowy, and although it sounds more real played pizzicato, the doubling does no harm even then. Please tell me if you agree about the pizzicato, or if you think it all nonsense?

Let me thank you once more for this glorious piece, whose beauties now lie fully revealed before me. The construction seems to me more and more wonderful. If it were not so exquisitely compact, proportioned like the facade of some romanesque church, how could one commit it to memory so quickly?...⁸

Elizabet von Herzogenberg to Brahms

Nice, November 8, 1888

My very dear Friend, - Forgive me for bothering you again so soon, but I must ask whether the discrepancy between the original "bridge" leading to the second subject and the parallel passage later is deliberate or accidental? You remember, the first time it is -



and the second time, where to be consistent, B flat major should be followed by C, the sentence begins with A major. Please do you mind explaining? I still have no message from Frau Schumann, so am keeping the sonata; but ought I to have despatched it to Frankfurt before? If only Joachim might have it soon! I cannot say how badly I have wanted him just now, with all due respect to the musical Amanda.

One thing more: in the 6th and 7th bars of the Finale you change the harmonies in the piano part but not in the parallel passage. I thought I would just tell you. Personally I am glad, and should even prefer a simple augmented triad (F, A, C#) to accompany the F on the fiddle, instead of that E, which always sounds like a

⁸ Ibid., pp. 364-66.

mistake. Until you forbid me, I shall continue to play -



The more I play the Finale, the more hopelessly do I fall in love, with it. "Wind und Strome, Donner und Hagel rauschen ihren Weg".⁹ I hardly know anything else that tears along with such spirit. I always wonder how you felt when you tried to fetter the mental picture and shape it in artistic form. How glorious it must be to feel it has lost none of its original power in the process of development, from that first conception to its present elaborately worked-out form! It has preserved all its natural flavour, and yet every little note plays its allotted part in building up a masterpiece. How often must even the greatest composer find the cherished vision he is striving to capture "melt like a cloud of mist and vanish like a breath",¹⁰ or appear as a lifeless reproduction! But this is so warm with life, so full of fire and vigour, so direct and sincere in its appeal, that the consciousness of any intermediate stage is entirely absent.

Had I but the gift of eloquence to tell you really and truly all I feel, and how entirely this great, this beautiful work has won our hearts!...¹¹

Clara Schumann to Brahms

No Date.

What a wonderfully beautiful thing you have once more given us...I marvelled at the way everything is interwoven, like fragrant tendrils of a vine. I loved very much indeed the third movement which is like a beautiful girl sweetly frolicking with her lover - then suddenly in the middle of it all, a flash of deep passion, only to make way for sweet dalliance once more. But what a melancholy atmosphere pervades the whole! The last movement is glorious...¹²

⁹"Goethe, Das Gottliche" (Max Kalbeck Footnote).

¹⁰"Quotation from the song 'Wie Melodien zieht es,' Op. 105, No. 1" (Max Kalbeck footnote).

¹¹Herzogenberg Correspondence, pp. 367,68.

Brahms to Clara Schumann

Vienna, November, 1889

*...The thought of my D minor sonata wandering along gently and dreamily under your fingers is too pretty and pleasant. I actually laid it on my desk and in my thought went gently stealing through the organ-point shrubbery with you. You always at my side, and I know no greater happiness than when I sit by your side, or, as now, walk beside you.*¹³

Clara Schumann to Brahms

Frankfurt, February 1, 1894

*We also had Joachim with us for an evening and he played me a quartet by Robert and they played your third sonata with me. That was a joy such as one seldom has! In the first movement, with its singing harmonies melting into each other, I had constantly the feeling that I was floating on the clouds. I cannot tell you how I love this sonata; every movement of it - who knows whether it is not the last time I shall ever play it!*¹⁴

Brahms to Clara Schumann

Vienna, February 8, 1894

*How delighted I am when you write as kindly about my music as you have this time about my third violin sonata; I went straight away and took it up tenderly and played it to myself.*¹⁵

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 124.

¹⁵Ibid.

Date Due

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